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THE SPIRIT
IN THE NEW TESTAMENT

THE SPIRIT IN THE NEW TESTAMENT

BY

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PREFACE

No doctrine has proved so fruitful in modern Christianity as that of the Spirit. During the last century, and more especially in our own generation, the social order has undergone profound changes; our knowledge of nature and of the process of human development has been immensely widened; the documents of the faith have been subjected to critical inquiry, with the result that many of the old assumptions have given way. If our religion has been able to maintain itself under the altered conditions this has been chiefly due to the doctrine of the Spirit which it has inherited from the early church. The disciples believed that along with his message Jesus had imparted the revealing and life-giving Spirit. His Gospel was not bound to a fixed tradition but was capable of endless growth and self-renewal. It could take into itself new elements, and keep pace with the world's movement, and appeal with a fresh meaning to every age. This great conception was long obscured under the various authoritative creeds, but is now finding its rightful place. Teachers of every school are guided by it more and more in their interpretation of the Christian message.

An attempt is made in the present book to examine the doctrine of the Spirit as it is set forth in the New Testament. The author acknowledges his

debt to many previous investigators, but has sought to trace out more fully and clearly than has hitherto been done the continuity of the doctrine under its manifold phases. He has tried throughout to understand the belief in the Spirit as the outcome of a real experience. Doubtless there were many influences that went towards the shaping of it, and these have all to be duly considered. But it was grounded in something more than abstract speculation or scriptural tradition. The church was conscious of a mysterious power controlling its life and worship, and in the endeavour to explain the fact it arrived at the doctrine.

The belief in the Spirit has always sprung out of an experience. It has been strongest in times of religious awakening, when men have grown suddenly aware that the truths they had clung to half mechanically are the great realities. They have felt themselves possessed with a quickening and uplifting power, which seemed to come directly out of a higher world. Nothing is more hopeful in the religious life of our own time than the deepening interest in the idea of the Spirit. Creeds and institutions are losing their authority, but men are assured, as never before, of a divine power which is working in their lives and in the affairs of the world. This belief in the Spirit, now as in the first century, often expresses itself in fantastic ways, but is none the less significant. It carries with it, if the testimony of the past means anything, the promise of a new and more vital faith.

The present book is not concerned with the larger questions which are involved in the idea of the Spirit. Its object is nothing more than to determine, by critical and historical methods, the nature of the New Testament doctrine and its meaning for the early church. But the New Testament must always be the starting-point for our religious thought. We need to go back to its teaching before we can frame a conception of the Spirit which will be valid for the mind of to-day.

E. F. Scott.

New York,
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CHAPTER I

THE SPIRIT IN THE OLD TESTAMENT

(1) *The Primitive Conception*

PERHAPS the oldest and the most persistent of all our religious ideas is that of the Spirit. It can be discovered, in some form, at the roots of the most ancient mythologies. It passed from primitive religion into the Old Testament, and was developed by the prophets to far-reaching issues. The church fell heir to it, and from the earliest days till now it has been a vital element in all Christian thought.

The idea of the Spirit may thus be regarded as the constant factor in religion—linking the most advanced speculation of our own day with the first awakening of the higher life in man. It has so remained constant because it has corresponded always with a genuine experience. Men have been aware, since the beginning, of an inexplicable power which entered from time to time into their lives. At first they could only associate it with strange conditions of body, but as their perceptions grew finer they learned to discern it in all higher moods and impulses. Theological doctrines have often been formed by an artificial process; but this

one of the Spirit has always answered to a reality. The Hebrew prophets, the Apostles of the early church, the revivalists and mystics of modern times, have all employed the idea of the Spirit to account for something which they have profoundly felt. Whatever we make of their theory there can be no denying the fact which they sought to explain. This must always be borne in mind as the guiding principle in our inquiry. The belief in the Spirit was doubtless affected by superstitions and philosophies which have now lost their meaning; but these in no sense produced it. In order to understand it we have to relate it at every stage to those living experiences out of which it sprung.

Imaginative writers have often conceived of early man as looking round on the world with a feeling of wonder, conscious of a divine presence in things which have now grown so familiar that we are blind to their mystery. But the truth, as all sober observation teaches us, was just the opposite. The sense of wonder in the contemplation of stars and ocean, of the myriad forms of life, of the processes of human thought, is late in development, and is a product of knowledge and reflection. It is strongest among the most highly cultivated peoples, and has grown with the progress of discovery in modern times. The disposition of primitive man, as of the savage to-day, was to take the ordinary world for granted. Things which happened invariably appeared in no way wonderful, and the sense of mystery was only awakened by that which

broke through the normal course of nature, by strange affections of mind and body, and accidents that had no apparent cause. Religion was first evoked by these extraordinary things. They were not ascribed to personal agencies, for to interpret them by conscious will demanded an effort of reflection to which the primitive mind was not yet equal. It seemed enough to attribute them vaguely to some unknown quality, some malign or beneficent force, which manifested itself from time to time in things that were familiar. The idea of the Spirit, in its rudimentary phase, is thus found at the beginning of all religion. Men accepted the world as they found it, and tried to adjust themselves to its orderly conditions, but they were made aware, ever and again, of a disturbing element with which they had to reckon. What it was they did not know, but recognised it only as a mysterious force, interfering with the settled arrangements of the world.

This idea of the Spirit, as it had grown up in primitive religion, passed over into Hebrew thought, and was denoted from the first by the word " Ruah." The word itself appears to have the root meaning of air in a state of agitation, and was therefore the usual word for wind. It was also applied to the breath, and since breath is the sign of life was used for the soul, the disposition, the will. Why this word was chosen to denote the unknown power which disturbs the given order of things, we cannot tell. Most likely it reflects the primitive mode of con-

ceiving all psychical action. Where we now think of an impulse rising within a man, the primitive mind imagined something that entered him from without. There was a force which moved invisibly, like the wind, and was sometimes breathed in by men and threw them into strange disorder. However it arose, the name Ruah is a survival, and in historical times its original sense of "breath" or "wind" seems to have been forgotten. It is significant that the idea of wind is rarely associated with it even by way of metaphor. Most commonly the Spirit is regarded as a sort of *liquid*. It is poured out on men—they are filled with it. The name that described it as like a breath of wind has become a purely technical term.

The Spirit of which we read in the Old Testament is always connected with God. Even when it is frankly described as mischievous in its effects, it is yet said to proceed from God. An evil Spirit comes upon Abimelech and upon Saul, but is sent forth from God Himself.[1] There are indications, however, that the conception had found its place in Hebrew thought before the religion of Jahveh had emerged, or at least before it had risen above the level of nature-worship. It is the grand distinction of this religion that as far back as we can trace its history it bore an *ethical* character. The conception of Jahveh which comes to us from the age before the prophets is no doubt crude. His worship consists for the most part of meaningless

[1] Judges ix. 23. 1 Sam. xvi. 14; xviii. 10.

ceremonial. He is associated with gross superstitions, and is made responsible for actions which by later moral standards would be condemned. None the less, an ethical character is always attributed to him. He is the Judge between right and wrong. He stands for a moral law, and inflicts punishment even on his favoured people when they transgress it. This belief that righteousness was the essential quality of God was the grand achievement of the Hebrew genius, and it existed almost from the first, and ensured the eventual triumph of Hebrew religion. Now it is significant that in the earlier literature the Spirit has nothing to do with ethical ideas. It is simply the power whereby a man is made capable of marvellous action, without any regard to the moral value of what he does. The Spirit comes on Samson, and he rends a lion as if it were a kid; it gives Joseph the power of interpreting dreams; it strengthens David for the performance of valiant deeds. The might and wisdom conferred by the Spirit might indeed be directed to high ends, and in most of the narratives they are so directed. But the Spirit is not necessarily given for these purposes. It is simply an uplifting power which takes possession of the man by a kind of accident, and the manner in which he makes use of it depends entirely on his own will. From this we may infer that it was not in the first instance connected with Jahveh, who is always conceived as working towards some moral end. It belonged to that earlier phase of religion when

divine action was recognised only in what was exceptional. The frenzy that seemed to change a man into a different being, the access of strength or illumination that raised him for the moment above his fellows, were ascribed to the descent on him of the mysterious Ruah. In itself it was an irresponsible power, striking at haphazard like the lightning, and issuing in either good or evil.

In the surviving records, however, the Spirit is always brought into relation to Jahveh. Even when its action is inconsistent with what they know of Jahveh's character, the writers feel it necessary to associate the Spirit with him. The reason is doubtless to be sought in the growing influence of the monotheistic idea. When once the belief had taken root that there was only one God, who was the source of all energy, the conceptions that had formerly prevailed became inadmissible. They could maintain their footing only in so far as they adjusted themselves to the belief in the one God. In the earlier Old Testament literature this subordination of the Spirit to Jahveh is effected artificially, one might almost say violently, as in the story which tells how a Spirit obtained permission from Jahveh to deceive the king's prophets.[1] Here the Spirit is regarded, in the ancient manner, as working for evil as well as for good, but its action is no longer independent. It is under the control of Jahveh, and must go forth at his behest, even when its errand is to deceive.

[1] 1 Kings xxii. 19 f.

The belief in the one God caused the Spirit to be subordinated to Jahveh, and also led to the conception that it was one under all its manifestations. From the earliest times it was vaguely recognised that all spiritual action was of the same kind, and could be summed up under a common term. But the idea of a single Spirit was as yet undefined. The one agency was found to exert its influence in many different modes, and each of them could be described as a separate Spirit. Traces of this habit of thought are not infrequent in the Old Testament. There are references to the Spirit of madness, of slumber, of error, and although the later writers use such language figuratively, it reflects a belief which was once literally held. But with the conviction that God was one, there arose the idea that the Spirit sent forth from Him was likewise one. All spiritual action was now traced back to the operation of the one Spirit, expressing itself in a variety of ways. The term "Holy Spirit," which begins to meet us in the later writers, may have had its origin in this effort to think of the Spirit as one. By means of the epithet the idea of many Spirits, acting independently of each other and of God, was definitely excluded. All supernatural powers were declared to be simply aspects of one power, which was a Spirit proceeding from God and fulfilling His holy will.

From this relation of the Spirit to Jahveh it also followed that spiritual action was no longer perceived in what was merely abnormal. The higher

impulse was no doubt still identified, in a peculiar manner, with things that were exceptional, but where earlier thought took account only of their mystery, emphasis was now laid on their divine quality. The effects of the Spirit were inexplicable, because they belonged to the heavenly order, over against the earthly and human. In this manner we may best understand a difficult passage, which undoubtedly goes back to a very early period, "My Spirit will not always strive," or, as we ought almost certainly to translate, "will not always continue with man, for he is flesh."[1] Jahveh has determined to shorten the span of human life. By the mating of angels with women the heavenly and earthly orders have been confounded, and the decree goes forth that this must not be. Man is flesh; the angels, as heavenly beings, partake of the divine Ruah, and are transmitting it to their earthly children. Man's limitations must be clearly defined by the abridgment of his allotted years. The passage is important as the earliest expression of an idea which was afterwards to form an essential element in the doctrine of the Spirit. It is already assumed that the Spirit is mysterious in the sense that it pertains to the heavenly, as contrasted with the earthly order. By means of it men share in those higher prerogatives from which, by the law of their human nature, they are debarred. In the Old Testament this idea is never philosophically developed, but the way is prepared for

[1] Gen. vi. 3.

those conceptions which at a later time were to govern the theology of Paul.

As a power proceeding from God Himself, the Spirit was thus associated with divine action, and not merely with abnormal phenomena of any kind. But the primitive idea still persisted that the Spirit only exercised its influence on rare occasions, for short intervals, and in the lives of exceptional men. In many of the ancient narratives this intermittent nature of its action is vividly described. The Spirit "leaps upon" Samson,[1] and makes him equal to some superhuman deed. It comes with like suddenness on Gideon,[2] and carries him victoriously through the battle. Saul is overtaken by the Spirit, so that he acts in a manner quite contrary to his intention. Old Testament thought never entirely escapes from this idea of the activity of the Spirit as sudden and spasmodic, and in the New Testament we again encounter it. In one form or another, it has maintained itself to this day. Its persistence cannot be explained from the survival in the minds of later thinkers of a traditional belief. We must account for it rather from the influence of observed facts on the theoretical doctrine. In all ages it has only been at rare intervals that men were lifted above the customary level of their lives, and became capable of great things, and like the Old Testament thinkers they have construed the action of the Spirit by their own experience.

But while Hebrew thought thus clings to the con-

[1] Judges xiv. 19. [2] Judges vi. 34.

ception of a power that works intermittently, we can trace at least the beginnings of an effort to think of it as constant. It is only now and then that Samson displays the might of the Spirit, yet he has been singled out from other men as its instrument, and in some sense is endued with it always. Great national leaders have the Spirit bestowed on them as an abiding possession, ever ready to assert itself, though at ordinary times it may be latent. From the time that David was anointed the Spirit of the Lord came upon him mightily.[1] A great prophet like Elijah is impelled at intervals to some conspicuous deed, but is always something more than a man like others. A strange power belongs to him as part of his personality, and may spring at any moment into action. A remarkable passage in Numbers[2] which itself may be ascribed to a later period than that which we are now considering, appears to express in something like a reasoned form the view which had long been current. The seventy elders who were appointed to assist Moses were seized with the prophetic impulse, but presently it ceased. The Spirit in its direct manifestation was given them only for the hour, yet the effect of this sudden influx was to raise them permanently to a higher plane, so that they were qualified henceforth to discharge their higher duties. It is evident that Old Testament thought had grown dissatisfied with the early notion of the Spirit as a mere gust that came and went. The need was felt

[1] 1 Sam. vi. 13. [2] Num. xi. 25 ff.

of regarding the spiritual activity as permanent, but this higher conception was not possible until the teaching of the great prophets had radically transformed the primitive religion.

In the earlier literature, we must not look for any consistent theory as to the nature of the Spirit. The writers took up a belief that had come down to them, and were content to note the effects of the Spirit in the lives of exceptional men. Something possessed these men—some power that had come out from a higher world, but what it was they could not know or conjecture. Sometimes it seems to be regarded as personal, a demonic being which takes the place of a man's own will. Thus in the story of Micaiah[1] the Spirit that misleads the king's prophets is an angelic messenger, acting by Jahveh's permission. The Spirit that comes upon Saul and again departs is described in personal terms. In certain episodes of the history of Elijah the Spirit is apparently conceived as a kind of demon, which seizes on the prophet and transports him from place to place. But more often it is regarded as a substance or essence which is " poured into " the man, and, like a substance, it is capable of being divided. When the seventy elders are chosen the Lord takes part of the Spirit that is in Moses and bestows it on them. Elisha prays that a " double portion " of the Spirit of Elijah may be granted him. The phrase is obscure, and ought perhaps to be translated " two-thirds of the Spirit," unless the reference

[1] 1 Kings xviii. 12. 2 Kings ii. 16.

is to the double portion which was inherited by the first-born. In either case the Spirit that dwelt in Elijah is plainly conceived as material and divisible. It has always to be remembered that in ancient times no clear distinction was drawn between a power and a material essence. In our modern thought we contrast the material and the spiritual—the forces which depend on some physical agency and those which act solely through will and intelligence. But this distinction was never fully grasped by the ancient mind. It was taken for granted that every power, however impalpable in its working, was conveyed through some kind of substance. What we now call the spiritual as opposed to the material was itself imagined as a finer and more penetrating matter. A confusion was thus entailed which we have to reckon with in the whole scriptural doctrine of the Spirit, in the New Testament no less than in the Old. Paul, as we shall see later, is unable to free himself wholly from the conception of the Spirit as semi-physical. Regarding it, though he does, as the power of love, wisdom, righteousness whereby the believer is inwardly renewed, he yet thinks of it as in some manner a superior essence which is infused into the old life and transforms it. At the same time, this confusion, due to the limitations of ancient thought, hardly affects the main idea. For the Biblical writers the Spirit is in the first instance a divine power. How it is conveyed, or what it ultimately consists in, they do not inquire, or only vaguely surmise.

They are content to know that a higher energy, which has come forth from God, takes possession of men from time to time and makes them something more than themselves.

Throughout the earlier period this Spirit of God is seen to manifest itself in exceptional actions, for these alone appear to be traceable to a supernatural cause. Ethically, the Spirit continues to be indifferent. As bestowed by God, it works towards the fulfilment of God's purposes, but in itself is nothing but a mysterious force, which makes a man different from ordinary men. It was inevitable that *madness* in all its modes should be explained by spiritual possession. At a later time, as in the Gospels, it was ascribed to the malign operation of evil spirits, but this refinement was not felt to be necessary by earlier thought. Madness was the most striking of all the deviations from normal action, and was therefore due to the power that was responsible for all that was strange in human life. As far back as our records go, the Spirit was associated in a special manner with the prophetic madness. In Israel, as elsewhere, the prophet was originally an ecstatic, and the same Hebrew word continued, even in later times, to denote the raving of the madman and the afflatus of the prophet. We can gather from the historical books that the prophet was expected to deliver his message in a condition of frenzy, which was induced or heightened by wild dances and exciting music. In the age of the great prophets these accompaniments had been laid aside.

The messages of Hosea, Isaiah, Jeremiah are the product of no disturbed fancy but of clear insight, consequent on sustained meditation. Yet the frenzy of the primitive seer was still accepted as the typical mode of prophetic utterance. The great prophets, by a sort of convention, speak of their oracles as conveyed to them in a state of ecstasy, into which they are thrown by the entrance of the Spirit. It is in this way that we must account for that close association of the Spirit with prophecy which had such momentous consequences for the later doctrine. The idea of spiritual possession had reference at first only to the physical ecstasy in which the prophet uttered his message, but it came in course of time to be transferred to the inward condition which made him aware of the divine will. Not only so, but the action of the Spirit was discerned in the message itself as well as in the exalted mood. Revelation was nothing else than the mind of the Spirit disclosing itself.

One remarkable feature in the early history of the doctrine has already been touched on, and requires to be considered more fully. It might have been expected that a conception derived from primitive thought would be applied mainly to the explanation of natural phenomena, but of this there is no trace in the earlier literature. The Spirit always manifests itself in *persons*. It is the power that works towards exceptional action in the life of humanity. The reason of this limitation is difficult to discover, for the Hebrew mind was sensitive, in a high degree,

to the grand phenomena of nature, and they are described, in some of the loftiest strains of the Old Testament, as the revelation of divine might and wisdom. But while storm and lightning, the motions of the stars and the manifold life of nature are attributed to God, they are never related to the Spirit of God. Why was the sphere of the Spirit thus restricted, even at a period when all religious ideas were crude and fluid, to purely human activities? The fact can hardly be accounted for on any other ground than that the belief in the Spirit was always linked with actual experience. Nothing could be certainly known of the strange phenomena of nature. One theory and another could be hazarded as to their origin, or they could simply be ascribed to the wonder-working power of God. But extraordinary happenings in human life could be felt and observed. Men were inwardly conscious of those sudden gusts of impulse which for the moment displaced their own will, and which were evidently due to the entrance of a mysterious power, For this power of which they seemed to have actual knowledge they reserved the name of the Spirit. At a later time they began to reason from the action of the Spirit in themselves to its larger action in the world of nature, but these speculations, as we shall see, were never carried beyond a tentative stage. In the earlier period all thought about the strange power was confined to its known operations in the life of man.

When we pass to the age of the great prophets, we find that this activity of the Spirit in human

life is viewed under a special aspect. The men on whom the higher power is bestowed are men who in some capacity work for the *nation*—kings, statesmen, counsellors, prophets, above all the coming Messiah. This was a vital element in the prophetic teaching on the Spirit, and was destined to have far-reaching issues. It seems to be rooted in the conception of Israel as the people which God had chosen, and to which He therefore vouchsafed a supernatural guidance. The men who controlled the life of Israel were to be thought of, not as acting of themselves, but as led by the Spirit of God. Is there any trace of this connection of the Spirit with the chosen nation in the earlier literature? Some scholars believe that they can detect it as an integral part of the doctrine from the first, and it can be read, without much difficulty, into many of the early references. Samson was not merely a strong man, but the champion of Israel. Bezaleel put forth his skill in the service of the tabernacle, which was to house the national religion. But such explanations are forced and unnecessary. The heroes of primitive times were indeed Israelites acting on behalf of Israel, but the primary thought undoubtedly is that they were men of exceptional endowment, only to be accounted for by a supernatural cause. The Spirit in early times was simply the power that lay behind abnormal action, and the ethical interests which that action might promote are not considered. At the same time, a higher development was inevitable when once the Spirit

was definitely connected with Jahveh. It was now, not the Spirit merely, but the Spirit of God, and its action was viewed in the light of His nature as the just and holy God, whose love was upon His people. According as the Spirit was bestowed on them, judges were able to know wisdom, kings to govern justly, prophets to declare the truth. As yet the character of God was apprehended dimly and was invested with not a few of the attributes of an Oriental sovereign. But already for the Hebrew mind He was above all else the righteous God, who supplies His Spirit that it should further the ends of righteousness.

(2) *The Spirit in the Prophets*

It was the task of the great prophets to develop that conception of Jahveh as a righteous God which had always lain at the heart of Hebrew religion. From the age before them they took over the belief in the Spirit as the source of all that is extraordinary in human life, but they bring it into harmony with their new conception of God, and of the moral order which He maintains.

The ethical idea is not, indeed, always directly emphasised. Jahveh is not only the righteous but the sovereign God, different in nature from the things he has created. The Spirit sent forth from him partakes of this higher quality. It represents the higher power entering into the life of man, and charging it, from time to time, with a new

energy. When Isaiah says of the Egyptians, "their horses are flesh and not spirit,"[1] he seems almost to conceive of the Spirit as a heavenly substance. Men are helpless, the same prophet declares, "until the Spirit is poured on them from on high."[2] Of themselves they are weak, as creatures of earth, and require the strength that must come to them from above.

It is remarkable that the earlier prophets rarely apply the idea of the Spirit to their own mission. The prophetic frenzy, as we have seen, had always been regarded as the most striking manifestation of the Spirit, and we should have expected the prophets to enforce their claims by means of this popular belief. But it falls away almost completely. Isaiah, Amos, Micah, Hosea, when they insist on their divine commission derive it immediately from God. "The hand of the Lord is upon me." "The Lord said unto me." "Thus saith the Lord." To this rule there are only one or two exceptions,[3] and even these are somewhat doubtful. The breaking away from the traditional idea of prophecy must have been deliberate, and was most probably due to the very fact that the Spirit and prophetic madness were so closely connected in the popular mind. Charlatans who professed a divine enlightenment had always traded on their supposed possession of the Spirit. It had come to be taken for granted that the man who spoke by the Spirit was either

[1] Isa. xxxii. 15. [2] Isa. xxxii. 15.
[3] Micah iii. 5 f.; iii. 8.

a crazed dervish who threw out words without meaning, or an official "seer" whose business it was to "prophesy smooth things." People had become suspicious or contemptuous of all spiritual utterances, dismissing them, as Hosea tells us, with the summary verdict "he that hath the Spirit is mad."[1] The great prophets, intensely conscious of the seriousness of their message, were anxious to dissociate it, as far as possible, from the customary forms. Jeremiah goes so far as to discard all reference to the Spirit—even when the tenour of his thought would seem to involve it. His predecessors are alive to the grandeur of the old conception and use it occasionally to splendid purpose, but are careful to avoid the false suggestions which might arise from relating it to prophecy. After the exile, the need for reticence is apparently over. It may be that when prophecy had been permanently lifted to a higher level there was no longer the same danger of mistaking the prophet for an ill-balanced enthusiast. Or perhaps the idea of the Spirit had now acquired such a connotation that it could be supplied to the work of a prophet without fear of ambiguity. The Second Isaiah, in some of his most impressive allusions to the task entrusted to him, describes himself as under the influence of the Spirit.[2] Ezekiel constantly speaks of the Spirit as the source of his revelations, and falls back at times on the primitive idea of the Spirit as a demonic agency which transports him from place to place.

[1] Hosea ix. 7. [2] Isa. xlviii. 16; lxi. 1.

The prophets have not freed themselves from the belief that the Spirit acts suddenly and intermittently,[1] but for the most part they think of it as a permanent influence.[2] They have ceased to assume that God reveals Himself only in what is strange and exceptional. He is the guardian of moral laws which are constant in their operation, and faith in Him is grounded in nothing else than in the firm conviction that He will act always in accordance with those laws. The service of such a God calls for a steadfast mood of loyalty and obedience, not merely in conspicuous deeds achieved now and then in the strength of a sudden impulse. Thus the Spirit comes to be conceived as an abiding power, sent out from God for the support of His servants. In so far as they possess it they are able, in spite of human infirmity, to maintain fellowship with God.

With the prophets, therefore, we leave behind us altogether the primitive notion of an irresponsible power, which has only become attached to Jahveh in order to satisfy the requirements of monotheistic religion. The Spirit is now in a real and intimate sense the Spirit of the Lord. Its one function is to accomplish the will of God, and its attributes are all understood in the light of the divine character. So closely is it identified with Jahveh that the prophets often speak indifferently of "God" and "the Spirit of God." Indeed it might almost seem as if there were no real place in the higher prophetic

[1] Cf. Isa. lix. 19. [2] Cf. Isa. xxviii. 6. Zech. iv. 6.

teaching for the old conception. The Spirit is simply God acting on men—imparting to them something of His own might and wisdom, and in most of the passages there appears to be no reason why this action should not be attributed directly to God. Why is it that the traditional idea is still preserved? The answer is probably to be sought in two directions. (1) On the one hand, we must bear in mind the difficulty experienced by ancient thinkers in conceiving of a power *abstractly*. In order to act, it must have some medium by which to transmit itself. This comes out very strikingly in well-known passages where God is described as effecting His will by His *word*. This does not mean merely that His bare will is sufficient, for to the Old Testament writers the divine word is invested with a certain reality. It goes out from God with a substance of its own, like the rain or the snow, to fulfil the purpose whereto He sends it.[1] In like manner, God acts on men by imparting His Spirit—an essence which carries with it the divine energy. Sometimes, especially in the later prophets, the Spirit is described in terms of personality. Israel is said to have grieved the holy Spirit.[2] The Spirit lifts up a standard against the enemy.[3] It is self-taught, and stands in need of no counsellor.[4] Again and again Ezekiel appears to speak of it under personal attributes. Language of this kind, however, is little more than figurative, or at most reflects

[1] Isa. lv. 11.
[2] Isa. lxiii. 10–14.
[3] Isa. lix. 19.
[4] Isa. xl. 13, 14.

the need of assuming an actual vehicle through which the divine influences are imparted. (2) This suggests the other reason why the prophets refuse to give up the old conception. It enables them to suppose a real contact of the divine with the human nature, and yet to preserve the due distance between God and man. For Pagan thought all moods of ecstasy and lofty emotion implied an actual possession by a divinity. Apollo himself entered the Delphian prophetess and spoke through her; the votary of Attis or Osiris was for the moment identified with the god; poets and artists ascribed their inspiration to the presence of a divinity within them. Hebrew monotheism shrank from the presumption of imagining God Himself taking possession of a man. It thought of God as approaching His servants through a power that had indeed come forth from Him and expressed His holy will, but was still other than Himself.

The Spirit, then, although apart from God, is conceived as His agent and manifestation. This is apparent, above all, in the ethical character which is now always ascribed to its work. God is the God of righteousness, and the Spirit proceeding from Him is a moral energy, operating for moral ends. It is assumed that man himself is a creature of earth, who, with all his striving, cannot perfectly obey God's will, and who must receive from God the wisdom and strength which are lacking in him. "Not by might or power, but by my Spirit, saith the Lord." [1] When the inspiration of the prophet

[1] Zech. iv. 6. Cf. Isa. xxviii. 6; xxx. 1. Zech. xii. 10.

is once more attributed to the Spirit, in the period after the exile, the emphasis is laid on this moral quality in his work. The ancient prophets were regarded as inspired because in their outward behaviour they displayed a frenzy which was plainly supernatural. But for the Second Isaiah the prophet's inspiration is to be measured by his insight into God's will, his capacity for judging the present and the future in the light of eternal moral laws. The Spirit that rests on him is not that of ecstasy, but that of full consecration to the cause of God.

As a power working for moral ends the Spirit is brought into close relation to the life and destiny of Israel. It is in the prophets that we first meet definitely with this idea which was henceforth to determine the whole history of the doctrine. How are we to explain this reference to the nation, which narrows and at the same time deepens the prophetic teaching on the Spirit? It is partly due, no doubt, to that idea of Israel as the people of God which pervades the Old Testament, and which in the prophets takes on a new significance. Since God had chosen Israel the supreme task of the people was to know God's will and accept its guidance in all things. The Spirit had been vouchsafed to them that they might be kept true to their high calling as a holy nation. But we have also to reckon with the tribal instinct which still maintained itself, in spite of the wonderful advance in religious thinking. The idea persists that God cares not so much for individuals as for Israel the nation, and that men and women have a claim on Him as members of the

elect nation. In later prophecy we can trace the beginnings of personal religion, and it is noteworthy that with this new attitude we have a change in the conception of the Spirit. This is particularly striking in Ezekiel, who seems to aim consciously at a transformation of the doctrine, so as to give it a definite bearing on the lives of individual men.[1] But even in Ezekiel the change is only partially effected. The unit of the prophet's thinking is still the nation, and he demands a renewal in its individual members only that they may constitute a worthier nation.

The Spirit, then, while it expresses the moral character of God, is the power that presides over the destiny of Israel, even when it can only bring about the higher welfare of the nation by means of punishment.[2] Its action is traceable in events now happening, but the history of Israel in the past likewise bears witness to its presence. From the time of the wilderness onward the life of the nation has been directed by the Spirit of God.[3] The chief emphasis, however, is laid on the operation of the Spirit in coming days. Isaiah foresees that the nation must undergo a temporary eclipse, but is confident that through the Spirit it will be restored.[4] Ezekiel, writing in the exile, looks forward to a time when God will revive the scattered nation by His Spirit, and place it again in its own land.[5] The

[1] Ezek. xxxvi. 26, 27; xi. 19. [2] Isa. iv. 4.
[3] Isa. lxiii. 10–14. [4] Isa. xxviii. 6; xxxii. 15.
[5] Ezek. xxxix. 27.

same thought is expressed, with splendid imaginative power, in the vision of the Valley of dry bones. The Second Isaiah writes when the promised restoration has become a certainty, and in the events that are hastening it he sees the operation of the Spirit, which will not rest until it has fulfilled God's purpose with His people.

This idea of the future action of the Spirit in the life of the nation takes a peculiar turn in the prophecy of Joel. "And it shall come to pass afterwards that I will pour out my Spirit upon all flesh; and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams, your young men shall see visions; and also upon the servants and upon the handmaids in those days will I pour out my Spirit." [1] This famous passage, which was to exercise such a momentous influence on Christian thought, is difficult to interpret. Perhaps it means no more than that the portents in nature which will mark the last days, "wonders in the heavens and in the earth, blood, and fire and pillars of smoke," [2] will be accompanied with strange disturbances in human life. The ordinary mood even of common men and women will give place to one of wild excitement. More likely the prophet foretells that the participation in the Spirit which had been reserved hitherto for chosen leaders will be granted to all the people. At the approach of the great day Israel will be inwardly transformed, and will be a

[1] Joel ii. 28–29.
[2] Joel ii. 30, 31.

holy nation in very deed. The meaning would thus be the same as that of Moses' prayer, "would God that all the Lord's people were prophets." For later thought the prophets were representative of Israel in its ideal vocation, and a time is foreseen when even the humblest Israelite will share in their possession of the Spirit.

The conception of the Spirit as securing the future welfare of the nation finds memorable utterance in certain prophecies of the Messiah. It has already been noticed that from the earliest times the Spirit was regarded as the necessary endowment of all great national leaders. Kings, prophets, counsellors were qualified for their office by the descent on them of the Spirit of the Lord. The inference was thus inevitable that the Messiah would be endowed with the heavenly power in a pre-eminent degree. Isaiah declares that the Spirit will be given to him in all its manifold energies, and that it will *rest* upon him as his enduring possession.[1] It is through the Messiah that God will finally effect the great purpose which He has had in view with Israel, and in him, therefore, its whole power will be concentrated. A similar thought pervades the various passages on the Servant of the Lord in the Second Isaiah.[2] The Servant is not the Messiah, and it is doubtful in what precise sense he must be understood. He may be Israel as contrasted with the heathen nations, or the righteous remnant of Israel, or per-

[1] Isa. xi. 2. [2] Isa. xlii. 1; lxi. 1.

haps a personal figure in whom the prophet sees the type of Israel's suffering and victory. But in any case the task of the Servant is to represent Israel and to bring to a consummation the work for which it had been chosen. This is also the task of the Messiah, and the Servant, like the Messiah, is endowed with the Spirit that he may bring it to fulfilment.

(3) *The Spirit in the Later Old Testament Literature*

The famous passage in Joel illustrates the direction in which the idea of the Spirit had been moving during the prophetic period. It was now recognised that the mysterious power which broke in from time to time on the normal course of life was sent forth by God, and accomplished His high purposes. Its activities, moreover, had a special bearing on the destinies of Israel. God had chosen this nation, and was seeking by His Spirit to keep it faithful to its ideal vocation. From this it followed that the full outpouring of the Spirit was reserved for the future. More and more as the pulses of the national life grew weak and God ceased to reveal himself in great leaders and prophets, the idea grew up that the Spirit which had been operative in the past was for the time being in abeyance. A day was coming when the nation would rise again, and the Spirit would be poured out on all flesh. The passage in Joel seems also to illustrate the growing

conviction that the work of the Spirit was related not only to the nation, but to the individual life. Ezekiel had enforced his doctrine of personal responsibility with the help of the idea of the Spirit, and Joel conceives of the new energy as imparted in future days even to the humblest. A fresh path was thus opened for later thinkers, and was destined to lead them to high results.

But before tracing this development it is necessary to glance at another, of a more speculative kind, which never was fully carried out in the Biblical literature, though it played a great part in subsequent theology. We have already seen that the strange phenomena which were supposed to have their origin in the Spirit were only those which manifested themselves in the sphere of human life. Conceived though it was in terms of substance, the Spirit was never associated with the physical world. But in the later literature we have at least the beginning of an attempt to discover the Spirit at work in nature. The author of the book of Job declares that "by his Spirit God hath garnished the heavens,"[1] and that "if he gather unto himself his Spirit all flesh shall perish together."[2] In the 104th Psalm the Spirit appears as the vivifying principle in all creatures. "These all wait upon thee:—thou takest away their breath, they die and return to their dust. Thou sendest forth thy Spirit, they are created; and thou renewest the face of the

[1] Job xxvi. 13. [2] Job xxxiv. 14, 15.

earth." [1] The idea is sometimes that all forms of life are derived from the Spirit. "They have all one Spirit, and man hath no pre-eminence over the beasts." [2] Elsewhere it is man alone to whom life is communicated by the Spirit. "My life is yet within me, and the Spirit of God is in my nostrils." [3] "But there is a Spirit in man; and the breath of the Almighty giveth him understanding." [4] "The Spirit of God hath made me, and the breath of the Almighty giveth me life." [5] Life as it exists in man would seem to be regarded as something of higher nature which has entered for a time into an earthly being; at death it returns to its divine source, "to God who gave it." [6]

The idea of the Spirit as operative in the natural world finds its chief expression in the opening chapter of Genesis, which belongs to the later period of Old Testament thought, although it stands at the beginning of our Bible. The creative activity of the Spirit is here described by a peculiar term which suggests the brooding of a bird; but there is no reason to infer, with some scholars, that the narrative depends on a primitive myth as to the origin of all life from an egg. Nothing more is implied than that the world of matter was full of hidden potencies, which were brought into action by the fostering of a divine power. In the verses which follow, however, this idea appears to fall away. No further

[1] Ps. civ. 27 ff.
[2] Eccles. iii. 19; cf. Job xxxiv. 14.
[3] Job xxvii. 3.
[4] Job xxxii. 8.
[5] Job xxxiii. 4.
[6] Eccles. xii. 7.

reference is made to the activity of the Spirit, and we are given to understand that all things were created by God's all compelling word. Perhaps there is a blending of two conceptions, which had arisen quite independently. According to one, the world was already contained potentially in the formless matter, and unfolded itself from within under the brooding of the Spirit. According to the other, matter was itself utterly dead, and was made capable of life and order by the word of God. If the narrative existed from the first as we have it now, the writer would seem to divide the work of creation into two distinct stages. Nothing existed in the beginning but a chaos of lifeless matter, and into this dead mass the Spirit of God entered as a quickening principle. When it was thus wrought to higher possibilities God evoked them by His word, and so formed the ordered universe. In any case, the Spirit is regarded as the primary agent in creation. It seems to be described personally, but this is nothing more than a figurative mode of speech. The writer's one object is to affirm that God was the maker of the world, and the Spirit is the creative power which goes out from God with a being of its own and leavens the original chaos. In this theory of creation profound suggestions were offered to future thinkers, but they were never elaborated in the Biblical literature itself. The Hebrew mind had scarcely begun to turn itself to cosmical speculation when it came into contact with the Greek culture. The problems with which

it was struggling had already received what seemed to be their final solution in Greek philosophy, and the conception of the Spirit, as the creative principle of the world, was merged in that of the Logos.

The chief interest of the later Old Testament development must be sought in another direction. Instead of allying itself with cosmical speculation the idea of the Spirit was brought into closer relation to the inner life of man. It took on a purely religious significance. This was partly the consequence of that individualism which became more and more pronounced as the life of the nation decayed. Formerly the Spirit had been identified with Israel, but it was now thought of in its action on individual Israelites. It was the power by which men were sustained and guided in the life of righteousness and brought into communion with God. But the new development was due even more to that advance in the conception of God which had been effected by the prophetic teaching. For Hebrew thought God had always been the Sovereign enthroned in heaven, who executes His will by the ministers sent out from Him, and this conception of Him was too deeply rooted ever to be dislodged. There was no room for that striving after a participation in the divine nature which was characteristic of Pagan mysticism. But in the period after the exile, although the belief in God's transcendence was maintained and even heightened, the more religious minds came to feel its inadequacy. If there was to be true fellowship with God it was necessary to

think of Him not merely as dwelling in heaven, but as present everywhere to those who trusted Him. The idea of the Spirit lent itself to this religious need. By means of it God could be conceived as the divine Sovereign and yet as in some sense all-pervasive. Men could believe that He had immediate knowledge of them, that they could draw near to Him and enter into His mind and purposes. The classical expression of this belief is found in the 139th Psalm. "Whither shall I go from thy Spirit, and whither shall I flee from thy presence?" It is not surprising that a foreign influence has been suspected in the Psalm as a whole, and in this part of it more especially. God seems to be conceived in pantheistic fashion as a Spirit everywhere diffused, from which men cannot escape, since it is around them and within them. But it is clear from the whole context that the Psalmist thinks of God in the genuine Hebrew manner as Creator and Ruler. He is everywhere in the sense that all things are within His knowledge and are controlled by His providence. It is significant that the mention of His Spirit is conjoined with that of His "presence" or "face." The Psalmist works with the old conception of a God who is throned on high and beholds all that is done among men; but the thought of this divine omniscience is carried to a deeper issue. God not merely looks on men but is in some manner present with them through His Spirit.

The fellowship with God which is so mediated

appears in the later Old Testament books as the chief end of life. Men are to serve God not so much in view of what they will receive from Him as from the knowledge that nearness to Him is itself the highest good. In place of the earlier petitions for length of days and deliverance from trouble we have now the prayer "Renew a right spirit within me; cast me not away from thy presence and take not thy holy Spirit from me."[1] The Psalmist is aware that sin is grievous not only because it entails punishment, but still more because it breaks the fellowship with God which is the chief purpose and joy of life. He implores forgiveness in order that this fellowship may be restored. It is through the holy Spirit that he enters into communion with God. The Spirit which comes forth from God represents God Himself, and makes Him an abiding presence in the hearts of His people.

So on these higher levels of the later religion it is often difficult to distinguish between the just and merciful God and the Spirit by which He draws near to men and brings them into harmony with His own nature. None the less, the idea persists that the Spirit is something other than God; and this is the very reason why the conception maintains its place in the Old Testament. With their strong sense that the Creator must stand apart from His creation—that the true attitude towards Him must be one of awe and worship, the Hebrew thinkers fall back on the idea of an intermediary power.

[1] Ps. li. 10–12; cf. Ps. cxliii. 10.

Their desire is for closer fellowship with God, but they refuse to seek it by way of mystical communion such as was offered in the Pagan cults. They pray that God should come near to them and draw them to Himself by imparting to them His Spirit.

CHAPTER II

THE SPIRIT IN LATER JUDAISM

THE period between the Old and New Testaments was in many ways decisive for Jewish religious thought, and must be taken into account before we can understand the rise of Christianity. Beliefs inherited from the prophets were in this period carried to their logical issue, and were blended with those of popular religion. They were thrown into new moulds and applied in special directions, in view of the changed conditions in the national life. But this inward development was helped forward by influences which acted from without. From the time of the exile onwards the Jewish people had been brought into close contact with alien civilisations, which affected their religious thinking as well as their habits of life. Palestine, for several centuries, was a province of the great Persian Empire, and Persian religion, which in some of its higher aspects was akin to that of the prophets, had left its mark on Jewish beliefs. In particular, the apocalyptic strain which had always had a place in Hebrew thought was now reinforced by the highly developed eschatology of Persia. At a later time Judaism was touched by those

Greek influences which predominated in the East after the conquests of Alexander. The Jews, more than any other people, resisted the allurements of the Hellenic culture, and sought deliberately to exclude it when they had won back their independence under the Maccabees. But the opposition to Greek ideas which was successful in Palestine itself was impossible in the foreign countries where Jews were now settled in great numbers, and where the intellectual life of the race was often keenest. In Egypt, Syria, Asia Minor, there sprang up a Judaism which found its chief inspiration in Greek thought, and this Hellenistic Judaism reacted on the Palestinian schools.

During the period in question, therefore, many forces were at work for the remodelling of Old Testament ideas, and it might have been expected that they would powerfully affect the doctrine of the Spirit. The effort to construe it speculatively could now be supported by the resources of Greek philosophy. From the side of Persia a more direct influence might have come into play, for in Persian religion the name of Good or Holy Spirit was applied to the First Principle, by which man is inspired with wisdom and truth and the impulse to right living. But it cannot be made out that Persian thought had any effect whatever on the Jewish doctrine of the Spirit. The Greek influence was far more important, and a real attempt was made by thinkers of the Dispersion to bring the traditional teaching into line with Greek speculation. But this

experiment, which might have led to fruitful results, was arrested. It cannot be proved that the conception of the Spirit, as it meets us in the New Testament, was modified in any essential respect by alien modes of thought.

Why was it that in the case of this doctrine the foreign influences went for so little? Perhaps the main reason was that the doctrine itself had fallen into the background, and the need for reconciling it with new modes of thinking was not seriously felt. Belief in the Spirit had its ground in certain experiences, and in the religion of the later age these had become unusual, and to a great extent unreal. It was not that faith was now less genuine, but it tended increasingly to find its outlet along prescribed channels. Especially as the Law became dominant the one aim of religion was a studied obedience to its commands. It was assumed that by way of this obedience, and not through exalted moods of thought and feeling, could fellowship with God be attained. The prophetic ecstasy was rarely felt. Spontaneous insight and impulse counted for less and less in religious life. In the systematised religion of this later time there was little place left for the idea of the Spirit, and we cannot wonder that it was largely neglected. Since it was so prominent in the Old Testament it could not, indeed, be wholly forgotten, and incidental references to it are not uncommon. But it is no longer an essential element in religion. Interest is concentrated on those legal and ethical and apocalyptic ideas with

which the piety of the age was more vitally concerned.

To this it may be added that the speculations which would naturally have started from the doctrine of the Spirit had found other points of attachment. Already in the century before Christ the Logos idea had begun to exercise an influence on Jewish thought. Intellectual Jews in the Dispersion had become familiar with it, and had found in it a means of reconciling their ancestral beliefs with the results of Greek speculation. At one time it appeared more than likely that the Spirit might be identified with the Logos, and might so be conceived as the creative and governing principle of the world. But the Old Testament afforded another and still nearer parallel to the Logos hypothesis. From a very early time Hebrew thought had occupied itself with the idea of Wisdom, and on this basis had built up a sort of native philosophy. To begin with, Wisdom seems to have been little more than the faculty of knowledge, applied on the one hand to the world of nature, and on the other to the practical conduct of life. Its great exemplar was Solomon, who spoke ten thousand proverbs and was acquainted with the ways of birds and beasts and plants. But a higher meaning was read into the conception when a wisdom was attributed to God analogous to that of man, but infinitely greater. By His works of creation God displays His wisdom, of which human wisdom is only the reflection—the impress on man of the divine

nature. Finally, as in the culminating chapters of the books of Job and Proverbs, this divine wisdom was endowed with something like a personality, and was made to act as the assessor of God in His government of the world.[1] It is not surprising that when Jewish thinkers were brought into contact with the Greek culture they were struck with the resemblance of this idea of Wisdom to that of the Logos—the pervading Reason which for the Stoics was the ultimate reality. In the attempt to reconcile Greek philosophy with the teaching of the Old Testament the conception of Wisdom, not that of the Spirit, was taken as the starting-point.

A further reason why so little is heard of the Spirit in this later age was the reverence now paid to Scripture. With the growing sense that the age of prophecy was over, an ever higher value was placed on the revelation already given. It was assumed that the Spirit which had visited the prophets had fully delivered its message, which now required only to be treasured and interpreted. The Prophets had been succeeded by the Scribes. It is characteristic of this later age that the Spirit is commonly referred to in conventional formulæ, introducing quotations from Scripture, which is accepted as the final disclosure of the divine will. If there had been any strong impulse of creative religious thought it would doubtless have overborne this deference to Scripture, but such an impulse was lacking. Even the apocalyptists, while they

[1] Job xxviii. Prov. viii.

profess an insight into divine secrets, are conscious that their wisdom is derivative and to some extent artificial. They write under venerated names of the past, and are content to enlarge on the suggestions thrown out in the ancient writings. They look forward to a future age in which the Spirit will again be active, but are conscious that for the present it has been withdrawn.

In the apocalyptic literature, therefore, although a number of allusions to the Spirit can be discovered they are for the most part perfunctory and are chiefly due to Old Testament reminiscence. The book of Daniel falls back on the old belief that it is the Spirit which endows men with wisdom, and gives them the faculty of interpreting dreams. In the Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs the Spirit is conceived, after the prophetic manner, as a higher moral energy. "The pious man has no stain on his heart, for the Spirit of God rests on him." [1] There are stray references to the Spirit as a cosmical principle, the agent of creation and of the order which holds the world together.[2] Of special interest are the occasional passages which describe the Messiah as fitted for his office by the endowment of the Spirit. This idea is touched on in the book of Enoch,[3] and is more fully developed in the Psalms of Solomon.[4] For the most part, however, the Psalmist merely reflects the thought and language of Isaiah, though he adds the suggestion that the

[1] Test. Benj. iv.
[2] Judith xvi. 15. En. lx. 12.
[3] En. lxii. 2; xlix. 3.
[4] Pss. Sol. xvii. and xviii.

Messiah, in so far as he possesses the Spirit in extraordinary measure, will be of divine nature. The view is apparently held by the author of the " Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs " that through the Messiah God " will pour the Spirit of grace over men, so that they will walk in the ways of the Lord." [1] Such passages are important for their bearing on New Testament thought. They show that Isaiah's conception of the Messiah as endued with the whole power of the Spirit had now established itself as an integral element in the apocalyptic hope.

It is noteworthy that in this later literature the connection of the Spirit with the nation tends to be dissolved. The Spirit, so far as it appears at all, is conceived abstractly as the power through which God acts in the fulfilment of His sovereign will. But this severance of the idea from the purely national interest does not imply that it was coming to be construed more broadly and profoundly. It proves, rather—what is abundantly evident on other grounds—that the Spirit now occupies a subordinate place. For the apocalyptic writers, even more than for the prophets, the national interest is primary, and can no longer be associated with a half-obsolete doctrine.

When we turn from native Palestinian thought to the literature of the Dispersion, we have to do not merely with echoes of the Old Testament but with a real development on original lines. It was in the period between the Testaments that Greek

[1] Test. Judah xxiv. 2.

influence made itself strongly felt, and from this time onward ideas of a philosophical nature began to blend with the traditional conception of the Spirit. The dominant philosophy in the age preceding the Christian era was Stoicism, which was fast absorbing into itself not only the results of earlier Greek thinking but elements which had filtered in from Egyptian and Oriental sources. In Stoicism the idea of Spirit had a prominent place, but this Stoical doctrine must be carefully distinguished from the Hebrew one, with which it had little more in common than the name. The Stoics thought of the divine nature pantheistically, or rather put an impersonal principle in the place of God. It was one of the peculiarities of the philosophy that this principle was at once metaphysical and material. On the one hand it was the Logos, the universal Reason, which was everywhere the same although it was refracted in the multitude of Logoi that dwelt in individual things. On the other hand, it was a material element, interfused with all existence, and identified, at least by the earlier Stoic thinkers, with fire, the most subtle and mobile and penetrating of all elements. This fire, instinct with Reason, is conceived as pervading the whole creation and vitalising it. It is the soul of the world, and the soul which is in man is a spark of the divine fire, destined in the end to be drawn back into it, or into one of the stars which it has kindled. But while conceiving of the ultimate reality in this material fashion, the Stoics are careful

to insist that it is fire only in the sense that fire is more akin to it than any substance we know. It is infinitely finer and more active than earthly fire. It is a pervasive æther, aglow with its own motion, and may fitly be described as a πνεῦμα or Spirit. From this conception of a Spirit which mingles with all existence the Stoics sought an answer to the various problems of physics, chemistry, physiology. Spirit, they maintained, is infinitely elastic, and by its tension or contraction gives rise to all movement. Man is able by the act of will to control the Spirit which informs his body, and so to effect the tension whereby he sees and hears and sets his muscles in motion. But the operations of will and mind are themselves to be explained from the same cause. The soul is composed of Spirit, and its intellectual processes and its right and wrong desires are so many varying degrees in the tension of the spiritual substance.

It will thus be seen that the Stoic conception was radically different from the Hebrew one, and still more from that which meets us in the New Testament. To be sure the prophets, and for that matter the Christian thinkers, are unable to free themselves from the primitive confusion of power and essence. They believe that when God sends His Spirit into a man an actual substance of some kind takes possession of him. But allowing for the survival of this mode of thought, a contrast is clearly drawn between material and what we now call spiritual action. It is recognised that man

is subject not merely to earthly forces but to influences of a higher order which proceed from God. In the Stoic doctrine, however, the interest is not to contrast the spiritual and material but to identify them. The Stoic sets out from the assumption that all existence is ultimately the same. Virtue and intelligence are in the last resort modes of the same force that manifests itself in trees and animals and in all phenomena of the visible world. The whole object of the Stoic doctrine of the Spirit is to provide a ground for this monistic theory. There is no need to postulate a divine Being, for all activity that men are wont to attribute to God can be explained by the modification of the one pervading substance. When we seek to trace Biblical ideas to alien sources it is always necessary to consider meanings as well as words, and this is nowhere more clearly illustrated than in the apparent echoes of the Stoic doctrine of the Spirit. More than once in Stoical writers we find the great Johannine assertion "God is Spirit," expressed in the self-same words, and the inference might appear a certain one that the Evangelist has simply taken over a formula of the current philosophy. Yet in point of fact he employs the words in a sense directly opposite to that which they bear in Stoicism. For the Stoics God is Spirit inasmuch as "God" is only a name for that material principle into which all things can be resolved. The evangelist is seeking to declare that God is not to be thought of under any material forms. Communion with Him is

only to be attained in that inner life which is wholly apart from the visible world.

The immediate effect of the Greek influence on the doctrine of the Spirit was a purely negative one. Jewish thinkers were strongly attracted by the Stoic theory of an immanent Logos through which God acted on the world, but they attached it to the Old Testament conceptions of Wisdom and the creative Word. The idea of the Spirit, instead of gaining a new scope and content from Greek speculation, became more and more restricted. Of this we have striking evidence in the comments of Philo on the opening verses of Genesis,[1] where the Old Testament itself invites a cosmical theory of the Spirit. But Philo refuses to avail himself of this unique opportunity of developing the doctrine on speculative lines. He disposes of the reference to the Spirit by a laboured interpretation of the term in its literal meaning of "air," and proceeds to argue that God created the world through the Logos. The native Hebrew conception is simply discarded in favour of the borrowed one.

How are we to account for this preference? It was partly due, no doubt, to the fascination of the new philosophical idea, with its imposing background of centuries of Greek thinking. It was due, moreover, to the feeling that the Logos had its true counterpart in the Old Testament idea of Wisdom, rather than in that of the Spirit. But it may also be explained from a genuine anxiety to preserve

[1] De Opif. Mund. viii.

for the Spirit that distinctive place which would have been lost if it had been drawn into the general current of Logos speculation. The belief in the Spirit was bound up with that conception of a living God, righteous and holy, which was the most precious inheritance of Israel, and the teachers of the Dispersion were content to leave it alone. For speculative purposes they could avail themselves of the Logos theory, but the Spirit belonged to religion in a more intimate sense. It had to do with the inner life of man, with his higher moral relations, with his communion with God. Perhaps the very fact that in the current philosophy the term " Spirit " had acquired a half-material meaning may have led the Jewish thinkers to avoid it.

So in the Hellenistic writings, which are practically all of Alexandrian origin, the idea of the Spirit remains for the most part in the background. The author of the Wisdom of Solomon is powerfully influenced by Greek thinking, and seeks to press it into the service of his Hebrew beliefs. But it is the Old Testament conception of Wisdom on which he bases his new interpretation. By divine wisdom the world was made; by the wisdom which God has implanted man has knowledge of God, and enters into fellowship with Him. In one or two passages this communication of wisdom is ascribed to the working of God's Spirit. " Who can know thy counsel unless thou sendest thy Spirit from on high? " [1] " The holy Spirit of wisdom will flee from

[1] Sap. vii. 17.

the thoughts which are without understanding." [1] In some passages there are approximations to the Stoic idea of a divine power everywhere present and holding the world together. "The Spirit of the Lord hath filled the earth." [2] "Thy incorruptible Spirit is in all things." [3] "For in wisdom is an understanding Spirit, having all power, overseeing all things, and permeating all intelligent and pure Spirit." [4] This idea, however, is only thrown out in occasional suggestions. The Wisdom which the author, in his ordinary mood, identifies with the Spirit is not a cosmical, pervading principle, but an inner sympathy with truth and righteousness.

Philo alludes frequently to the Spirit, for his works consist of commentaries on the Old Testament, and again and again he has to deal with texts in which the Spirit is mentioned. Most of his references are due to this necessity. He rarely speaks of the Spirit for the purpose of elucidating his own thought, and even goes out of his way, as we have seen, to transfer its attributes to the Logos. It is noticeable that he nowhere dwells on the creative activity of the Spirit. With that curious fidelity to cardinal Hebrew ideas which underlies his Platonism, he thinks of the Spirit as working exclusively in the sphere of human life.

Philo is at one with the Stoics in maintaining that all men partake of the Spirit. "Man is a composite of earthly nature and divine life. The

[1] Sap. i. 5.
[2] Sap. i. 7.
[3] Sap. xii. 1.
[4] Sap. vii. 22, 23.

Divine Spirit is sent to take its habitation on earth, in order that if man is mortal according to that part of him which is visible he may be immortal according to that part which is invisible." [1] "The essence of the soul is Spirit." [2] In one place [3] he used the word πνεῦμα of the vital fluid which passes from the soul to the various organs, as in the Stoic anthropology. But even while he partially conforms to Stoic theory Philo is at pains to preserve the Hebrew conception. "Spirit" for the Stoics was something that necessarily pertained to man. It was simply another word for that rational principle which resides in man, and which makes possible those ideas of God, virtue, truth which are common to all. Philo allows that in a limited sense all men thus possess the Spirit, but he declares, again and again, that the earthly man only has it in a slight degree. The true possession of the Spirit is exceptional. With his natural faculties a man is unable to comprehend the higher things; and for knowledge of God and full access to Him something else is necessary—the gift of the Spirit, which is only bestowed occasionally. Philo thinks of ecstasy as the characteristic mode in which it is thus vouchsafed, and the well-known passage in which he describes his own experience of the sudden inrush of an illuminating power is perhaps the classical account, in all literature, of the ecstatic mood.[4] It has often been argued that on this side of his

[1] De Opif. Mund. xlvi.
[2] Quaest. ii. 59.
[3] De Fuga xxxii.
[4] De Migrat. Ab. vii.

thought Philo betrays his affinities with Oriental religion, but a view of this kind is unnecessary. His association of the Spirit with ecstasy may be more naturally explained from the Hebraic tradition, which made the frenzy of the prophet the typical mode of the Spirit's operation. But between the Philonic idea and that of the Old Testament there is one striking and characteristic difference. For the prophets the insight that comes from the visitation of the Spirit is moral and practical in its nature. The Spirit makes known the will of God in such a way that dark events stand out in their true meaning and the course of right action is clearly prescribed. Philo thinks only of an intellectual illumination. The man who receives the Spirit, as he himself had done in those hours of rapt meditation which he portrays so vividly, has access to a profounder knowledge. A vision is granted him not so much of the will of God fulfilling itself amidst the contradictions of history, as of a higher realm of truth which is hidden from earthly sense.

Philo, therefore, though he appears at times to fall in with the Stoic view of the Spirit as a necessary element in all human souls, remains faithful to the Old Testament conception of a power that comes intermittently on chosen men. He is thus led to a train of thought of which the consequences were only to appear in Christianity. What is it, he asks himself, that hinders the Spirit from remaining in men? and his answer is that the chief obstruction is the *flesh*. Incorporeal souls will be able to receive

the Spirit continually and in fullest measure; but while we are entombed in the body, at the mercy of bodily appetites and accidents, the higher influence can only find entrance at rare intervals. "The greatest cause of our ignorance is the flesh, and our inseparable connection with the flesh."[1] This thought is constantly recurring in the works of Philo, and we cannot but see in it an anticipation of the idea which Paul was to carry out to such unexpected issues. Philo, indeed, never draws the full contrast of the Spirit and the flesh, or considers what it involves. His account of man's nature and of his relation to God is set forth in terms of Logos philosophy, and we need not look to him for any consistent doctrine of the Spirit. Yet the Hellenist of Alexandria is in some ways the best interpreter of the Hellenistic Apostle. He envisages the same problems as those which weighed on Paul when he developed his conception of the Spirit as the new principle in the Christian life.

[1] De Gig. vii.

CHAPTER III

THE SPIRIT IN THE SYNOPTIC GOSPELS

(1) *The Gospel Tradition*

A SURVEY of the history has been necessary for a right approach to the New Testament doctrine of the Spirit. The New Testament teaching cannot indeed be explained in a purely historical fashion. It cannot be too often repeated that the belief in the Spirit has always arisen out of actual experience, and the primitive church did not arrive at it by brooding over ancient texts and precedents. The belief was the expression of a fact. None the less the church fell back on the Old Testament in its effort to account for those new elements which were present in its life and worship. The marvellous powers which had resided in ancient saints and prophets were ascribed in Scripture to the Spirit of God, which was to be poured out in yet larger measure at the beginning of the last days; and it was inevitable that the disciples, when they sought to account for their strange experiences after the Lord's death should adopt the solution that was offered them in Scripture. They were convinced that what they were now witnessing was the operation of the Spirit, and that it foreshadowed the great day which was just at hand.

At the time when our New Testament came into being the belief in the Spirit had become cardinal in Christian thought, and prominence is given to it in the Gospels, no less than in the other writings. But when we examine the Gospels more closely it is at once apparent that a distinction must be made. The evangelists look back on the life of Jesus in the light of conceptions which were dominant in their own day, but are careful, at the same time, to preserve the tradition as they had received it. As a consequence there is a frequent discrepancy between the narrative itself and the manner in which it is presented, and this is nowhere more striking than in the references to the Spirit. The attitude of Jesus, as we can gather it from his recorded words, is manifestly different from that of the evangelists; and we have first to ask ourselves how far they are themselves responsible for the place which the Spirit seems to occupy.

It was the accepted belief of the early church that the Spirit had been promised by Christ to his people, and had been bestowed on them after his death. In the Fourth Gospel this belief is fully elaborated, but it meets us in the early chapters of Acts, in the theology of Paul, in casual references scattered through almost all the books. How it arose must be considered later, but at the time when the Gospels were written it was firmly held, and out of it another belief had naturally arisen. If Jesus had sent forth the Spirit after his death, then in his life-time he must have possessed it

The power which he was able to bequeath to his people must have been concentrated in his own Person. This belief appeared the more certain as it was borne out by the clear intimations of Scripture. In the central Messianic prophecy of Isaiah xi. 1–9 the Spirit is described as coming on the Messiah in all its fulness and resting upon him. That this conception remained a living one may be inferred from the Psalms of Solomon, dating from the generation before Christ, where the promised Deliverer is extolled as "Almighty in the holy Spirit, and wise in understanding counsel, with strength and justice."[1] These Messianic predictions had been blended in the mind of the church with those of the Suffering Servant, whom the prophet had likewise described, in several familiar passages, as possessing the Spirit in amplest measure. The evangelists set forth from the conception which had thus received the sanction of prophecy. They thought of Jesus as clothed with the manifold powers of the Spirit for the achievement of his Messianic work.

It is noteworthy that of the three Synoptic writers Luke alludes most frequently to the Spirit, and usually with the epithet "holy." This prominence of the Spirit in Luke, which is still more remarkable in the companion book of Acts, is difficult to explain. Sometimes it has been set down to the influence of foreign ideas on this writer, who had himself sprung from the Gentile church and

[1] Pss. Sol. xvii.

addressed himself to Gentile readers. But more likely it is due to his use of Palestinian sources, and reflects a mode of thinking prevalent in the early community. It is significant that in the opening chapters of his Gospel, the Palestinian origin of which can hardly be questioned, everything is ascribed to the operation of the Spirit. It came upon Zacharias, Elizabeth, Simeon; John the Baptist "grew strong in the Spirit" before he finally came forward as the precursor of the Messiah. In like manner the section of Acts in which we hear most of the Spirit is not that which concerns the Gentile mission, but that which recounts the early progress of the community in Palestine. It is further to be noted that Luke's conception of the Spirit is invariably the old Hebraic one. No mystical ideas such as afterwards came in from Hellenistic thought are traceable. The Spirit appears simply as the power from on high which manifests itself in marvellous action, knowledge of the future, right decision in moments of crisis and perplexity. But however we may explain Luke's predilection for the Spirit there is no doubt as to the fact. He thinks of the Spirit as presiding over the whole destiny of the new religion, from before the birth of Jesus until the mission had established itself at the heart of the empire. The two books of his history may almost be said to have their central motive in this view of Christianity as the outcome of the work of the Spirit.

In the Gospels, then, the life of Jesus is set in the light of the prophetic anticipation that the Messiah will be endowed with supernatural power. The narrative of Mark opens with the story of the Baptism, when Jesus saw the heavens opened and the Spirit like a dove descending on him. It is apparently assumed that hitherto he had been an ordinary man, chosen no doubt by God for a supreme task, but as yet lacking the necessary qualification. In his baptism he received that plenitude of divine gifts which would rest, according to prophecy, on the Messiah. The story itself bears a stamp of authenticity, and may go back to some communication made by Jesus to his disciples. We can well believe that in the solemn moment of his baptism he was conscious of a divine call, and of capacities in himself whereby he could answer it. His decision to enter on his public work was made, if our records can be trusted, at the time of his baptism, and something must then have happened to crystallise his dreams of high service for God into a clear resolve. Nor is it unlikely that the inward experience assumed for him the form of a vision. We know from other episodes of his career, as well as from the whole character of his teaching, that ideas were wont to present themselves to his mind as pictures. The call of which he was sensible at his baptism may have come to him as a vision, just as later, when he felt that the reign of evil was nearing its end, he saw Satan as lightning fall from heaven. It may even be that the visionary

nature of this experience is reflected in the descent of the dove, which figures so prominently in the accounts of the baptism. This strange detail has often been explained from the word used in the opening verses of Genesis, which might suggest that the creative Spirit "dove-like sat brooding o'er the vast abyss." There is no evidence, however, that this suggestion had ever been taken up by Jewish thought. Some modern scholars have laid stress on the significance of sacred birds in Syrian religion; but this far-fetched method of solving the riddle is only another way of giving it up in despair. It is possible that the words "as a dove" are nothing but a poetical figure, indicating that the Spirit alighted on Jesus suddenly and gently; but if they are to be taken in any literal sense they may be best explained as a fragment of reminiscence from Jesus' own account of his vision. He may have spoken, in some connection which we cannot now guess, of a dove that had appeared to him, and the detail may have clung to the memory of the disciples and given rise to the fancy that the Spirit had descended on him in this bodily form. In any case, a distinction has to be made between the actual experience of Jesus and the construction afterwards placed on it. That he knew himself Messiah at his baptism is scarcely possible, since it was only towards the end of his life that he advanced the Messianic claim. The higher consciousness seems to have grown up in him gradually, and perhaps was never wholly clear till the very

end. It was assumed, however, in the later tradition that he was aware of his Messiahship from the first, and that his right had been solemnly attested by God. As Messiah he had received the needful Messianic endowment. The Spirit in all its fulness had come upon him at his baptism, and throughout his subsequent career he had exercised its powers. That it had not merely alighted on him for a moment is made clear by the sequel of Mark's narrative, which tells that after the baptism he was driven by the Spirit—conceived as a demonic power, like that which had caught away Elijah—into the wilderness. After the episode of the Temptation Mark does not explicitly return to the idea of a control by the Spirit, and in view of the prominence given to the investiture at the baptism this may appear strange. But his silence does not prove that Mark departs from the theory with which he sets out, or that he has deferred, in his story of the baptism, to a primitive conception which had no significance to himself. He feels, rather, that henceforth it is unnecessary to insist on a fact which may be taken for granted. In the lives of ancient heroes and prophets the visitation of the Spirit had been intermittent, and had to be noted on each new occasion; but Jesus was the Messiah on whom the heavenly power had rested once for all. We are meant to read the whole subsequent history in the light of the solemn incident which marked its beginning.

The Gospels of Matthew and Luke both open

with a narrative in which the relation of Jesus to the Spirit is traced back to his very birth. However we may interpret this prelude to the Gospel history, one of the motives that lie behind it would seem to be theological. According to the earliest Christian teaching Jesus was raised to Messianic dignity after his resurrection. Later, the desire arose to think of him even in his lifetime as Messiah, and the moment of his baptism was fixed on as that of his consecration. But when once it was acknowledged that he had entered on his office while he still lived on earth, the date was inevitably pushed further back. From the outset he must have borne the higher character, and the Spirit which constituted him the Messiah must have been active in his birth. In the stories of the Nativity the idea of the Spirit as the Messianic endowment is blended with the later doctrine of the power at work in creation. By the Spirit of God life had been imparted to the first man, and through him to the human race. Jesus, however, owed his being to a fresh creative act of the life-giving Spirit; in a literal sense he was the second Adam. We can here perceive the difference between the Gospel story and the Pagan myths concerning the birth of demi-gods, to which it bears a superficial resemblance. It is not suggested that Jesus was born of a dual parentage, human and divine. The thought is rather that he was a new creation, in whom the power of the Spirit was directly operative, as it had been in the first man.

While they thus connect Jesus with the Spirit from his very birth, Matthew and Luke preserve the Marcan tradition of the descent of the dove at the Baptism. They perceive, apparently, that after the record of the miraculous birth it loses its significance, for the incident which originally implied the actual bestowal of the Spirit becomes a mere attestation. Jesus had always been Messiah, but now his right is acknowledged by God and made manifest to men.

For Matthew and Luke, as for Mark, the Spirit abides with Jesus as his constant possession; but in one passage Luke seems to forget that he is building on this theory. He tells that when Jesus gave thanks to God, after the return of the Seventy from their prosperous mission, he "rejoiced in the holy Spirit." [1] It may be that he thinks of Jesus in that exalted moment as moved in a peculiar degree by the power which was always present in him. But more likely we are to understand the passage in the light of later analogies. The evangelist is about to record one of the loftiest utterances of Jesus, and he recognises it as similar in character to those ecstatic outbursts with which he was familiar in the church of his own day. Like the Christian prophets Jesus was suddenly overmastered by the Spirit and expressed himself in rhapsody.

The ideas which are thus discernible in the

[1] Luke x. 21.

Synoptic Gospels are more crudely, but for that reason more obviously, presented in the surviving fragments of the Gospel of the Hebrews. In one very curious passage the Spirit appears as the mother of Jesus. "Forthwith my mother, the Holy Spirit, seized me by one of my hairs, and carried me away to Mount Tabor." Equally remarkable is the record of the Baptism. "And it came to pass, as the Lord came out from the water, that the source of all holy Spirit descended and rested on him and said to him: My son, in all the prophets I waited for thee till thou shouldest come and I should find my rest in thee. For thou art my rest, thou art my first-born son, thou who reignest for ever." The Spirit in these passages is conceived personally. It speaks to Jesus, raises him by the hair. It is represented as female—in consequence, it may be surmised, of the feminine formation of the word "Ruah." The apocryphal writer goes yet further and makes the Spirit the mother of Jesus, although the term is evidently used in some metaphorical sense. It is only from the time of his baptism that Jesus recognises the Spirit as his mother, and in one extant fragment a reference is made to his earthly mother. Most likely we have to explain the strange allusions in the light of the well-known Hebrew idiom which defines any close relation by the idea of sonship. Jesus was the chosen instrument of the Spirit. In the prophets it had dwelt fitfully and partially, but in him the very fountain of all spiritual impulse was

ever present. He could therefore be described as the Son of the Spirit.

It would be false to construe the doctrine of the Synoptic Gospels, or that of the Gospel of the Hebrews, in any metaphysical way. Jesus possessed the Spirit, he was the Son of the Spirit, in so far as he was endowed with that Spirit of wisdom and revelation which had visited the prophets and was to rest permanently and in all its fulness on the Messiah. At a later time the Messianic idea was superseded by that of the incarnation in Jesus of a divine principle, but in the earlier Gospels it is always primary. Jesus is the Messiah, and because he is the Messiah the promised Spirit accompanies and supports him. Its presence with him does not need to be continually asserted, for the Messiah, by the very nature of his office, acts always in the power of the Spirit. The evangelists, therefore, while they never lose sight of the manifestation of the Spirit in Jesus, are content to suggest it, by laying emphasis everywhere on His Messianic dignity.

(2) *The Teaching of Jesus on the Spirit*

At the time when the Synoptic Gospels were written a central place was accorded to the Spirit in the life and thought and worship of the Church. The evangelists look back on Jesus through the medium of the later doctrine, and think of him as ordained by the Spirit and filled with its power. It is therefore remarkable that in their record of

his actual teaching, as it had come to them in early documents, they report only a few sayings, and these of a doubtful character, in which he makes reference to the Spirit. Incidentally this is a striking proof of the fidelity of our Gospels to genuine tradition. The evangelists have often been suspected by modern scholars of reflecting into the words of Jesus the Christian ideas of their own time, and in points of detail they have undoubtedly done so in many instances. But if they deliberately sought to advance later doctrine under cover of Jesus' own teaching they would certainly have laid more stress on a belief which for themselves was cardinal. Their silence can only be explained on one ground—that they did not feel at liberty to garble their sources, in which this belief had a quite secondary place.

The passages in which Jesus is recorded to have spoken of the Spirit are very few, and call for special examination. (1) One of them requires only to be noted: "David himself said in the Spirit"—introducing a quotation from the Psalms.[1] Jesus here simply accepts the common view that the Old Testament was written under the inspiration of the Spirit, and uses the accustomed formula. It is true that he employs it in a pregnant sense, suggesting that since these words were inspired by the Spirit they meant more than David himself could fully understand. But the passage has no bearing on Jesus' own thought of the Spirit.

[1] Mark xii. 36. Matt. xxii. 43.

(2) Much more value attaches to a second saying: "Do not take thought beforehand what you should speak, but speak what is given you at that hour; for it is not you that speak, but the holy Spirit." [1] Here Jesus appears to regard the Spirit as guiding and counselling his followers; but there are several reasons for doubting the authenticity of the saying. (*a*) It occurs in a chapter of Mark which may be considered as in the main a fragment of Jewish apocalypse. No doubt the Jewish elements are combined with genuine words of Jesus, but the chapter as a whole lies under suspicion, and nothing contained in it can be accepted without some reserve. (*b*) The verse in question too evidently contemplates conditions which did not arise till a later time. Christians are thought of as undergoing trial before Gentile authorities, and are advised to make no formal speeches in their own defence. The early history of the church affords many instances of prisoners whose unpremeditated answers were more effective than laboured orations, and this simple and heart-felt eloquence was set down to the prompting of the Spirit. Jesus himself seems here to be credited with a sagacious counsel which the church had learned from later experience.

(3) Another reference to the Spirit is found only in Luke and may be still more confidently set aside. "How much more will your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask him." [2] In Mark's

[1] Mark xiii. 11. Matt. x. 20. Luke xii. 12.
[2] Luke xi. 13.

parallel we have the natural antithesis "good gifts," and it may be inferred from the Western text that this was the original reading in Luke also. It is well-known that in the Lord's Prayer, which comes immediately before, the version of Marcion altered the petition "hallowed be thy name" to "send thy Holy Spirit upon us," and the words in question seem like an echo of that reading.

(4) We now come to the two passages on which the main consideration must fall. Jesus declares according to Matthew "If I by the Spirit of God cast out demons, then is the Kingdom of God come upon you." [1] If this version of the saying be accepted we have here the most significant of Jesus' references to the Spirit. He would affirm, in so many words, that the power which worked through him, preparing the way for the Kingdom, was no other than the Spirit. But in the Lucan parallel the expression which he uses is "the finger of God," [2] and this has all the appearance of being more authentic. It is one of the vivid, unusual phrases in which Jesus delighted, and which the evangelists are prone to weaken by paraphrase. When we bear in mind, too, Luke's peculiar fondness for the idea of the Spirit, it is not likely that he would suppress it in one of the few sayings where it had an undoubted place. It may indeed be argued that the "finger of God" denotes a heavenly power, directly interposing, and is therefore equivalent to the Spirit. But this very fact that Jesus

[1] Matt. xii. 28. [2] Luke xi. 20.

contemplates the idea makes it the more significant that he avoids the word.

(5) There remains one other passage, which may justly be regarded as the most important—that in which Jesus answers the charge that he had worked his miracles by collusion with the devil.[1] He points out that since these acts of healing have no other end than to frustrate the rule of Satan they cannot have been performed with Satan's aid. They must be ascribed to a power antagonistic to Satan and able to overcome him, and those who call this divine power Satanic are guilty of an unpardonable sin. They have slandered the Holy Spirit. The general drift of the argument is clear, and beneath the antique forms in which it is expressed we can discern a profound and everlasting truth. For the man who calls evil good, who derides and vilifies a work which is manifestly of God, there can be no hope. His moral instincts are perverted. The very faculty by which he might have been drawn to repentance and better endeavour has become atrophied. But while the broad meaning admits of little doubt, the passage as it stands in our Gospels is obscure and confused. It had a place, apparently, both in Mark and Q, and while Matthew puts the two versions side by side Luke tries to combine them, in a manner which on the face of it is self-contradictory. The whole point of Jesus' argument is that those who slander his work are slandering the Holy Spirit,

[1] Mark iii. 28–30. Matt. xii. 31, 32. Luke, xii. 10

yet he is made to contrast himself with the Spirit and to declare that what is said against him will be forgiven. It is not unlikely that a misunderstanding has arisen through the double meaning of the Aramaic word " Barnasha " (" man " and " son of man "), and if so the original version of the saying may be embodied in Matt. xii. 32 : " He who utters slander against a man will be forgiven, but not he who slanders the Holy Spirit." The confusion in the record is itself a strong proof that the saying is genuine, for the evangelists are plainly in doubt as to its meaning, and only incorporate it because it belonged to the oldest stratum of the tradition.

In this passage, then, whatever may have been the precise words in which Jesus expressed himself, he declares that the power behind his miracles is that of the Spirit; and this would appear to be the only incontestable reference to the Spirit in the Synoptic teaching. It will be observed that even here Jesus makes use of the idea because it was, in a manner, forced on him. His enemies had said that he had an evil spirit, and he answers that the Spirit which dwells in him is the Spirit of God. It will be observed, too, that he makes this claim in connection with his miracles. Like his enemies, he recognises that these wonderful works must be due to a supernatural power, and he identifies it with the power described in the Old Testament as the Spirit. In other words, he does not formulate any mystical conception as to his Person and work,

but simply takes up the familiar Old Testament idea. As the Spirit had come upon Judges and Prophets, enabling them to do things that seemed impossible, so it had been vouchsafed to himself. He acts by a wonder-working power which is manifestly of God.

From this survey of the relevant passages it may confidently be inferred that the Spirit was not a primary conception with Jesus. We find him using it, first, in deference to the current belief that scripture was written under a direct inspiration, and, secondly, in connection with his miracles, which he ascribed, in accordance with Old Testament ideas, to a power from above. There is no indication that he thought of his teaching, or his relation to God, or the new life he offered to men, in terms of the Spirit. There is no evidence, for that part, that he availed himself of those higher conceptions which had gathered around the Spirit in the course of the Old Testament development. He confines himself to the primitive belief that abnormal phenomena are due to a divine power, acting through men.

How must we account for this almost complete absence from Jesus' own thought of the idea which was to dominate the mind of the church after his death? Some writers have assumed that although it appears so little in his recorded sayings he yet dwelt on it frequently in his more intimate converse with his disciples. The Fourth Evangelist works on a theory like this in his account of the discourses

at the Last Supper. But if the idea of the Spirit was thus primary for Jesus, it is impossible to explain how the Synoptists have overlooked it. Their whole estimate of the life of Jesus is moulded, as we have seen, by the belief that he was supremely endowed with the Spirit, and if sayings of his own had supported this view they would certainly have put them on record. If such sayings are not preserved it can be for no other reason than that they were never spoken. Jesus had proclaimed his message apart from that doctrine of the Spirit which became inseparable from it in the later age.

We cannot attribute his silence to any deliberate motive, such as may be traced in Jeremiah. The Spirit was no longer associated with the baser forms of religious excitement, and with deluding oracles that pretended to come from God. It had been related by psalmists and prophets to a pure and lofty teaching, which was fully in keeping with that of Jesus himself. That he had no distaste for the idea is evident from the one passage, almost certainly authentic, in which he turned it to memorable use.

His silence may be due, in the first instance, to the habits of religious thought and language which he shared with his age. In the period which had elapsed since the Old Testament the doctrine of the Spirit had fallen into the background. The ideas involved in it were still potent, but had come to be expressed in other categories, and it was characteristic of Jesus that he never harked back

to archaic models. Where John the Baptist imitated the language and behaviour of the prophets he was content to deliver his message in the forms most natural to his own time. For this reason he may have passed over the old conception of the Spirit.

Again, we may well believe that it was not entirely congenial to his own mind. His sense of God was immediate and personal. He may have felt that an idea like that of the Spirit removed God to a distance, or put an abstract power in place of Him. It is not necessary to suppose that he expressed this feeling to himself in reasoned form. His silence on the Spirit would result unconsciously from the effort to think of God directly as the Father, who was ever near to His children.

Again, the religion of Jesus was not metaphysical. Soon after his death, when the church threw in its lot with the Gentiles, a mystical strain entered into Christian thinking, and gave a new significance to the doctrine of the Spirit. Paul and John were aware of an indwelling power which regenerated their life, and made them partakers of the divine nature. But for Jesus communion with God was ethical. To be one with God was to be conformed to Him in mind and will, to exercise the love and justice and compassion which are the essential attributes of God. With such a view of religion he felt no need of the doctrine of the transforming Spirit.

Above all, we have to reckon with that tran-

quillity, that consistent elevation of thought and feeling which are manifest in the whole life of Jesus. In all times the belief in the Spirit has originated from the breaking in of sudden moods of rapture or illumination. The prophets were conscious from time to time of a power that took possession of them and lifted them above themselves. In the course of Christian history the idea of the Spirit has always been called in to explain the high experiences of the mystic, the strange impulses that turn men's hearts to God in seasons of revival. But those gusts of religious emotion were foreign to Jesus. His sense of fellowship with God was not an ecstasy to which he was subject at rare intervals, but his habitual mood. His insight into the will of God was calm and uninterrupted. When we compare him, for example, with Paul, the greatest of his followers, we at once feel the difference between a nature that dwelt serenely in the higher atmosphere, and one that was now in the depths of dejection and now caught up into the third heaven. In a real sense the Spirit *rested* upon Jesus, and for that reason he was unconscious of its presence.

CHAPTER IV

THE SPIRIT IN THE PRIMITIVE CHURCH

(I) *The Origin of the Doctrine*

THE life of the primitive community, if the record in the book of Acts can be accepted, was governed almost from the first by the belief in the Spirit. It is certainly strange that an idea which had little or no place in the teaching of Jesus should thus have become primary for his disciples in the days immediately succeeding his death. On this point, as on many others, the testimony of Acts has been called in question by recent scholars, who maintain that the doctrine of the Spirit was not adopted by the church until after its contact with Gentile thought. The religions of the time, and more particularly those Eastern cults which had now penetrated into the West, were enthusiastic in their nature. They rested on the belief that ecstasy was the true means of attaining to communion with God, and the chief aim of their ritual, especially in its more esoteric phases, was to induce the ecstatic mood. There can be little doubt that the spiritual gifts which were exercised in the early church—Glossolalia, prophecy, miraculous healings —had their parallels in Pagan religion; indeed it is

possible that in some of the rival forms of worship these gifts were cultivated more intensively and in wider variety than in the church. Must we not conclude, therefore, that the idea of the Spirit was mainly due to the foreign influences, and that the author of Acts has transferred to the primitive community the conditions of a later time? It is in connection with the church at Corinth that we hear most of the spiritual gifts; and this church was composed in the main of converts from heathenism, who still retained their heathen notions of worship. The Gospel, as we can gather from Paul's remonstrances, meant for many of those Corinthians a new religious excitement, similar to that which was offered by the prevailing cults. To such influences, it is contended, we must look for the origin of the belief in the Spirit. It is incredible that the earliest disciples, accustomed to the sober worship of the synagogue, fresh from the lofty ethical teaching of Jesus, should have constituted themselves on the very morrow of his death as an ecstatic sect.

But the account in Acts, whatever allowance may be made for legendary elements, may on several grounds be taken as historical. (1) The Pagan parallels to the idea of the Spirit prove nothing as to its foreign origin, for we have seen that it can be derived, at least equally well, from the Old Testament. Indeed the theory that it was borrowed from Paganism would create a serious difficulty, which disappears when we accept the older view. The spiritual phenomena which marked the cults

were all related to the mystical conception of religion. They had their ground in the belief that through ecstasy the worshipper was identified for the time being with the divinity. In the early narratives of Acts, however, the Spirit is represented in strict accord with Old Testament ideas, as a power given from above, to reinforce the natural capacities. On the assumption that the church had borrowed its doctrines from Paganism we must suppose that Luke has been at pains to re-cast it in the moulds of Hebraic thought. The more natural conclusion is that it had originated as he describes, in a Jewish community which had been nurtured on the Old Testament.

(2) There is no evidence whatever that the belief in the Spirit did not arise until the Gentile influence had made itself felt. Apart altogether from the record in Acts, Paul consistently takes for granted that the church had possessed the Spirit from the beginning. He makes it the very test of a Christian man that he must be endowed with the Spirit.[1] When he seeks to prove to the Galatians that the free gospel which he had preached to them was in keeping with the original message he appeals to the one fact that it had brought with it manifestations of the Spirit, no less than the gospel which had been taught in Jerusalem.[2] It was apparently by a similar proof that he had won the recognition of the older Apostles at the Council. He pointed to the operation of the Spirit accompanying his work, and

[1] Rom. viii. 9. [2] Gal. iii. 2.

they admitted that this was the sign-manual of genuine Christianity.[1]

(3) The doctrine of the Spirit is so rooted in New Testament thought that we cannot but infer its existence from the first. This, indeed, appears to have been the very reason why it continued to maintain itself. We shall see that Paul and John, with their conception of Christ himself as an indwelling presence, could find no real place for the Spirit. All the functions which they attribute to it are assigned also to the invisible Christ, and the insistence on a second divine power tends only to obscure and perplex their thought. Yet they cling to the belief in the Spirit simply because it was an integral element in Christianity which they were not at liberty to discard. A belief which had entered late, from some alien source, could not thus have made itself central and indispensable.

We may therefore confidently accept the testimony of Acts that the conception of the Spirit as the power now active in the church arose at Jerusalem, in the period immediately following the death of Jesus. How are we to explain the sudden emergence of this belief, on which Jesus himself had said so little? Sometimes it has been set down to theological reflection. The disciples, we are told, now fully convinced that the Messiah had appeared in Jesus, began to examine the Scriptures for the signs and characteristics of the Messiah's coming. In various prophecies, and especially in the great

[1] Gal. ii. 8, 9.

prediction of Joel, they found mention of the Spirit which would be poured out on God's people in the new age. They concluded that since the Messiah had now come the Spirit must have come also, and were prepared to assign all that was strange and exalted in the life of the brotherhood to this mysterious power. It may indeed be granted that without the Old Testament prophecies to guide them the disciples would not have expressed their belief in the form which it now assumed. But the belief itself was from the outset so fervid and spontaneous that it cannot have sprung out of mere reflection. At all times when the idea of the Spirit has strongly impressed itself it has corresponded with an actual experience, and we cannot suppose it otherwise in the primitive church. The disciples, in the ardour of their new faith, had become conscious of higher energies, of an impulse that moved in them and lifted them above their ordinary selves. They were confronted with a wonderful fact, and could only account for it by the operation of a divine power.

There is no good reason to question the statement of Acts that they first became aware of this power on a definite occasion. They had assembled for worship a few weeks after the Master's death, when one and another began to "speak with tongues"; and to minds familiar with the Old Testament this strange phenomenon could only be ascribed to the Spirit of God, which was the cause of everything incalculable in human life. An explanation now offered itself, not only for the speaking with tongues,

but for all the new activities which had sprung into being in that period of tense excitement, when the followers of Jesus were looking hourly for his triumphant return. None of them was so striking as the Glossolalia, and apart from that strange outbreak the other gifts of prayer and eloquence and enthusiastic faith might have been attributed to natural causes. But it was now recognised that all the other energies were kindred to the speaking with tongues and must have the same origin. A power from above had been communicated to the church, and was declaring itself in these marvellous gifts.

When we so regard the doctrine as the outcome of a real experience, a light is thrown on one peculiar feature of the New Testament tradition. The Spirit is represented as a gift from Jesus, which was only to become effectual after his death. In the Fourth Gospel this belief is made the basis of a profound theory of the work of Christ; but there is evidence that it was entertained in some form almost from the first. The church thought of the Spirit as bequeathed by Jesus, to advance his cause and to support and comfort his people after he was gone. It is not difficult to understand how the belief had its origin in a fact, which must have impressed the earlier disciples. They were well aware that the spiritual manifestations belonged to a time subsequent to the Lord's death. He himself had hardly spoken of the Spirit, and his followers, while they consorted with him, had not yet been conscious of its presence; yet on the morrow of his

departure it had revealed itself in a manner there could be no mistaking. The inference appeared certain that Jesus had bestowed this gift, in virtue of his new authority. It had come immediately after he had ascended, and on the men whom he had chosen. Not only so, but its purpose was manifestly to bear witness to him, and to assist the progress of his work.

The new power, operative in the church, was identified with the Spirit, which, according to prophecy, was to descend on the people of God in the last days. It was not deemed necessary to go behind the Old Testament data and inquire into the nature of the Spirit. In one or two passages of Acts it seems to be regarded as a personal agency. Philip is caught away by it, as Elijah had been;[1] it speaks to Peter;[2] Ananias lies to the Spirit.[3] More often it is conceived impersonally as a divine energy which is at the same time a sort of substance. It comes on the day of Pentecost as a rushing wind, and settles on the assembled disciples in tongues of flame. It is "poured out" or "shed forth," and men who receive it in peculiar measure are said to be "full of the Spirit." As in the parallel expressions in the Old Testament, we have to reckon with the inability of ancient thought to grasp the idea of abstract influence. It is always assumed that the change invisibly wrought in a man's will or intelligence is due to some real though impalpable substance which has entered into him. When baptism

[1] Acts v. 3. [2] Acts xi. 12. [3] Acts v. 3.

with water and baptism with the Spirit are conjoined in the language of the early church, something more is meant than that the material rite is the symbol of an inward change. The idea is rather that of a double immersion. The water is the counterpart of another, more subtle and ethereal element, in which the convert is baptised, and which transforms him into a new man.

It is characteristic of the earlier phase of the New Testament doctrine that the Spirit is supposed to come on a man suddenly and work in him intermittently. This also is in keeping with Old Testament ideas, but need not be attributed to their direct influence. It has always to be borne in mind that the psychical phenomena in the early church were of the same nature as those which had given rise to the Old Testament conception, and inevitably took the same form. Just as the mood of ecstasy came at intervals on the prophets and then passed away, so with the impulse that led the disciples to see visions and to speak with tongues. But while the Spirit is conceived as intermittent, it is yet in some degree an abiding possession. Now and then it springs into action, in such a manner that all can recognise it, but it is always latently present in those to whom it has once been given. In one respect, however, the operation of the Spirit is constant. While its motions are incalculable, the sphere in which it works is always the Christian church. Old Testament thought in its later stages advanced beyond the conception of the Spirit as

the sole possession of Israel, but the parallel idea in the New Testament is always maintained. (The Spirit is the gift of Christ to his people, and no one outside of their fellowship can share in it.) At the same time, though restricted to the church, it is imparted to all its members. (The very mark of a Christian is that he partakes in the Spirit.) Since it was thus bestowed on all, the question early arose as to when the convert entered on his privilege. Eventually the moment was fixed as that of baptism, but for some time opinion on this point seems to have fluctuated. It is one of the most significant proofs of the essential fidelity of Acts to the historical tradition that it reflects this uncertainty. Sometimes the author conforms to the view which in his own time was unquestioned, that the Spirit was given at baptism.[1] But sometimes he describes it as coming before baptism, as soon as a man professed his faith in Christ;[2] while elsewhere he speaks of it as imparted after baptism, through the additional rite of the laying on of hands.[3] This rite was derived from Old Testament custom, and perhaps was associated with the idea of the Spirit as an energy resident in particular men, and transmitted by physical contact from them to others. But it is hard to believe that this can have been the meaning attached to it in the primitive church, which conceived of the Spirit as given immediately by God. It can only have been adopted as a traditional form,

[1] Acts ii. 38; ix. 17. [2] Acts x. 44.
[3] Acts viii. 15 f.; xix. 6.

whereby the ordinance of baptism was invested with a further solemnity. In baptism the convert had been called by God, and by the laying on of hands he was accepted into the church. His fellow-believers acknowledged him as a brother; and as a full member of the community in which the Spirit was operative he received his share in the gift.

The church was doubtful as to the nature of the Spirit and the time when it was communicated; but there was always a clear conviction as to its effects. These were summed up briefly in the word "power" which is often conjoined with "Spirit," and sometimes is used almost as an equivalent term.[1] A man endowed with the Spirit becomes more than he was before; he acts with an energy which has plainly come to him from above. It is noteworthy that the power is always conceived as something new and foreign, not as a mere heightening of capacities already present. It takes many forms—Glossolalia, moving eloquence,[2] discernment of the unseen world,[3] knowledge of men's thoughts and words,[4] prophetic insight,[5] guidance in the work of the church;[6] and some of these gifts might well appear to be entirely new. Men who had hitherto been nothing out of the common would suddenly show themselves capable of impassioned prayer and speech, of lofty moods in which they seemed to hold converse with the unseen. This disclosure of rare gifts where they have never been suspected is

[1] Cf. Acts i. 8. [2] Acts iv. 8; vi. 5. [3] Acts vii. 55.
[4] Acts viii. 29; xi. 12. [5] Acts xi. 28. [6] Acts xiii. 2; xvi. 2, etc.

one of the best marked features of all religious revivals. Most of the so-called charismata, however, can have been nothing more than natural endowments, which were new only in the sense that they were exercised more zealously and directed to new objects. Each member of the church brought to its service his own individual aptitudes, and it is difficult to see how these should have been regarded as new gifts, only now bestowed on him as a disciple of Christ. The inference might rather have been drawn that since so many of the gifts were obviously the natural endowments heightened, all the charismata, however marvellous, were to be explained in the same way. To modern psychologists this would appear self-evident, but the primitive church took just the opposite view. It was impressed with the wonderful character of Glossolalia and similar gifts. They were manifestly new and miraculous, and all the gifts now exercised in the service of Christ must likewise be new. To outward seeming they might be nothing but inborn capacities, applied to higher ends, but in reality they were heavenly gifts, now imparted for the first time by the Spirit. It was reserved for Paul to conceive of the Christian life as governed in its whole extent by the Spirit and therefore supernatural. But the way was prepared for this doctrine by the primitive conception of the Spirit as the source of new energies, belonging to a higher order.

On its mystical side, however, the Pauline doctrine was quite alien to more primitive thought. There

is no suggestion in the early chapters of Acts of a union with Christ, or a radical transformation of man's earthly nature. We are told, indeed, that Stephen just before he died was filled with the Spirit, and saw the heavens opened and the Son of man standing on the right hand of God.[1] Nothing more is implied, however, than a condition of trance or rapture, and such experiences were doubtless not infrequent in the early church. The primitive conception of the Spirit was simply that of a power which took hold of men, and made them capable of new and extraordinary action. In this "demonstration of the Spirit" the church discerned two purposes, neither of which had anything to do with those mystical ideas that marked the Pauline doctrine. (1) On the one hand, the Spirit was given for the support and advancement of the mission. In so far as they possessed it, the disciples were enabled to defend themselves against enemies, to judge aright in difficult crises, to devote themselves fearlessly and unreservedly to the great cause. They could enforce their message not merely by words of human wisdom but by a resistless fervour of appeal and by new modes of utterance which compelled men to feel that they were not speaking of themselves. (2) On the other hand, the Spirit was the chief witness to the truth of the Gospel. On this aspect of its work a particular stress is laid in the book of Acts,[2] and the idea which thus arose in the early

[1] Acts vii. 55 f.
[2] Cf. Acts ii. 16 ff.; v. 32; vi. 10; xv. 8.

days continued to be prominent, and was fraught with momentous issues for later thought. Paul constantly appeals to the witness afforded by the Spirit. In the Fourth Gospel this witness is accepted as in the last resort the all-sufficient proof of the Christian message. A similar conviction underlies the first Epistle of John. In the thought of the primitive Church we need not look for such a doctrine as was set forth in these later writings and has been developed on many different sides in the subsequent theology. The idea of an *inward* witness, assuring the believer that he knows the truth and has entered into fellowship with Christ is altogether wanting. The Spirit bears testimony to the Gospel simply because it is a wonder-working power. Men are compelled to acknowledge that the church is entrusted with a divine mission, since it exhibits in its life and worship those marvellous phenomena which are evidently of God. The Epistle to the Hebrews, which preserves so much of the primitive mode of thought along with its advanced theology, gives clear expression to this idea :—" God also bearing witness by signs and wonders and by manifold powers and by gifts of the Holy Spirit, according to his will."[1]

(2) *Glossolalia*

The characteristic gift of the Spirit, in the view of the primitive church, was that of " speaking with

[1] Heb. ii. 4.

tongues." It was the sudden appearance of this gift which first convinced the disciples that the Spirit of which the prophets had spoken was now bestowed on them, and at a later time, when Paul had developed the early belief into a profound doctrine, he still thought of Glossolalia as in some respects the typical spiritual gift. It is necessary, therefore, to consider its nature in some detail.

The gift, according to the book of Acts, was bestowed on the day of Pentecost, when the place where the disciples were met together was filled with a rushing wind, and tongues of fire appeared to rest on each one of them. They were seized with an uncontrollable impulse, under which they "began to speak with other tongues." The story, on the face of it, bears the stamp of legend, but we have seen reason to believe that it preserves the church's memory of a real occasion. It is possible that even the wind and the appearances of flame are something more than fanciful additions. The disciples assembled at Pentecost were subject to a strong religious excitement, and we know, from many later instances, how easily such moods create the impression of things actually seen and heard. It is to be noted, too, that in these opening verses of the narrative there is no necessary reference to speech in foreign languages. We are merely told that they spoke "with other tongues" (ἑτέραις γλώσσαις), that is to say, in a strange, abnormal fashion. These opening verses, indeed, appear to form a separate

fragment, to which the author of Acts has appended his story. When we examine them closely we cannot but perceive that they connect in a loose and awkward manner with the section that follows, and have to be considered apart from it. It is significant, too, that Peter, in the speech attributed to him later on, never suggests that the tongues were real languages, although this has previously been emphasised as the outstanding fact in the miracle. The impression is left on us that Luke, by the method familiar to us in his Gospel, has imposed an artificial unity on portions of tradition which were originally distinct.

We have to do, therefore, not so much with a genuine piece of history, as with the author's elaboration of an incident which had come to him in a more or less uncertain form. Into the " other tongues " of his source he has read the meaning of foreign languages, and so proceeds to tell that the incident happened at one of the great feasts, when a multitude was gathered at Jerusalem, composed of people of all nations. The disciples, in the strength of their new gift, went forth to the multitude and addressed each race in its own language. It has been surmised that Luke avails himself of a Jewish legend, known to us from Philo, which told that when God delivered the Law on Sinai His voice divided itself into the seventy languages of mankind. A reminiscence of this kind is possible—all the more so if the giving of the Law, as some evidences would lead us to believe, was commemorated in the feast of Pentecost. It would be natural for the writer to

describe the birth of the new Israel in terms suggested by the anniversary of the ancient covenant. There is no need, however, to assume this background for the story. One of the characteristics of Luke is his love of symbolism, and in his Gospel he changes the true order of the narrative in order to foreshadow, in the rejection of Jesus at Nazareth, the future refusal of his message by his own people. In like manner he desires a typical frontispiece for his history of the Christian mission, and obtains it by allowing his imagination to play on the story of Pentecost. On that first day of the church all the nations which were hereafter to be gathered into the Kingdom of God were represented at Jerusalem, and the disciples were given power to address the Gospel to each of them in its own tongue.

That the " tongues " were not foreign languages is certain. Such a miracle would in any case have been unnecessary, since the races enumerated all spoke Greek, the universal language of the East. Paul and his fellow-missionaries, when they went forth shortly afterwards to just those races, did not require any linguistic gift, supernatural or otherwise. The language to which they had themselves been accustomed all their lives carried them everywhere. A gift such as Luke supposes to have been bestowed at Pentecost would have had no practical utility, except for work among remote and barbarous tribes which were not touched by the Christian mission until a much later period. But apart from this, the other New Testament references to the " tongues "

make it abundantly clear that they were not, in the proper sense, languages. Paul, who was himself gifted with them in exceptional measure, dwells repeatedly on the fact that they were unintelligible. They were not fitted for the purposes of human intercourse, but for the converse of the devout soul with God.

The record in Acts, however, can hardly be set down to mere ignorance of the true nature of the tongues. In later parts of the book the author makes occasional reference to them without any indication that he regards them as foreign languages.[1] He must, indeed, have been well acquainted with the character of Glossolalia, which continued to be the most singular feature in Christian worship in his time, and he could not but allow for a like knowledge on the part of his readers. It may be conjectured that while fully aware that the "tongues" were unintelligible, he believed, in common with many of his contemporaries, that they were real languages. We know that in modern times when a similar phenomenon has broken out in the church, the view has been held that the strange sounds would be found to constitute a language, if only it could be identified. Learned men have been called in to pass judgment, and have sometimes imagined that in stray syllables they could catch an echo of Greek or Hebrew. Theories of this kind would offer themselves from the first, and the account in Acts may very well reflect them. Luke apparently

[1] Acts x. 46; xix. 6.

believes that the sounds uttered in Glossolalia are not merely arbitrary. To be sure they have no meaning to the casual hearer, but if an audience could be selected from all the races of the earth, there would be some who would be able to recognise their own language. In the story of Pentecost this is made to happen. Representatives of all nations are gathered at Jerusalem, and in that polyglot assembly the " tongues " which are often put down to mere raving are discerned in their true character. Each form of Glossolalia is a language to those who are qualified to understand it.

That the sounds were regarded as in some sense true languages is apparent from the curious term applied to them, γλώσσαις λαλεῖν, " to speak with tongues." Many explanations have been suggested of this puzzling phrase. According to one view it means to speak with the tongue, apart from the understanding; but this is forced, and in any case is excluded by the use of the plural. Another view would explain γλώσσαι in the sense of obsolete or unusual expressions—a sense which still survives in our word " glossary." But it is difficult to see how a term peculiar to the philologist could have found its way into the vocabulary of the early church; and, for that part, Glossolalia was something else than the use of bizarre phrases. Indeed, the meaning of the term can hardly be other than that implied in Luke's narrative—that the speaker employed *languages*, though not necessarily foreign languages. Paul, in a familiar verse, contrasts

the " tongues of men " and the " tongues of angels," [1] and his reference is clearly to human eloquence as compared with the higher form of utterance in Glossolalia. It may be that Paul here ventures his own explanation of the strange phenomenon, but more likely he reflects the interpretation commonly placed on it in the church. The language of Glossolalia was mysterious, prompted by the Spirit, apart from a man's own will. What could it be but a divine language—the language in which God was praised by angels? If this is the origin of the term, the plural γλώσσαι might seem out of place. Diversity of speech is taken in the New Testament as the very mark of those earthly divisions which the church is destined to break down. According to the Old Testament story it was imposed on men to prevent them from uniting, and so aspiring to heaven. We should certainly have expected that the speech of angels would be conceived as one, in contrast to the babel of languages on earth. But the use of the plural may be attributable to a fact, so patent to all who observed the new phenomenon that it could not be ignored. Glossolalia, although it was evidently the same thing under all its manifestations, took many different forms, so that Paul can speak of γένη γλώσσων, various kinds of tongues. It would happen, no doubt, that men of different nationalities would frame the sounds on the pattern of the language they habitually used, and the Glossolalia of the Greek

[1] 1 Cor. xiii. 1.

and Aramaic churches would be easily distinguishable. But this cannot be the whole explanation, for Paul thinks of different kinds of tongues employed in the same community, and for that part by the same man. The reference may be simply to the various intonations that marked the cries of rapture and those of distress or imploring prayer. Still more probably, the form of the sounds varied with the alterations of mood, so that the speaker appeared to pass from one language to another. We know from modern parallels that practice in Glossolalia, as in everything else, brings versatility. The person who at first can only produce a succession of monotonous sounds acquires the faculty of varying them in a manner that seems to mimic articulate speech. This does not necessarily mean that the utterance is not spontaneous; in the primitive church, at any rate, we have every evidence that it was quite unforced. But with the habit of yielding to the mysterious impulse there comes an unconscious skill in directing it. By and bye the skill is exercised deliberately; and it may have been the suspicion that the " tongues " were not the unaided utterance of the Spirit which finally brought them into disrepute.

As to the true nature of Glossolalia there can be little doubt, for the phenomenon is one which has appeared again and again in religious history. Towards the end of the second century it reproduced itself in Montanism. In modern times it has been repeated among the Camisards in France,

the Irvingites in Scotland, and in numerous revival movements in England and America. In all these instances religious enthusiasm has given rise to outbreaks of strange utterance that resembled articulate speech; and it is this which on each occasion has made the phenomenon appear supernatural. Taken by itself it has many analogies in common life, as when at an exciting game or a political meeting or on the sudden hearing of good news men give vent to their feelings in sounds that come instinctively like the cries of animals. But why should this expression of pure emotion take the form, not merely of cries or of a few chance syllables thrown together, but of sounds articulated and varied like a succession of words? There is here a psychological problem which has never been adequately answered. One might suggest that in times of religious ferment something more is at work than pure emotion. Ideas are struggling to consciousness out of the emotion, but are still so vague and perplexed that they cannot be set forth in logical speech. A man's mind is full of something which he wishes to express in words, and instinctively he makes the effort of speech, but the words that come are nothing but a series of arbitrary sounds that only resemble words. Glossolalia is thus the mark of strong religious feeling which endeavours, not only to find relief, but to explain itself, and for this reason it appears most frequently in persons of inferior culture and intelligence, who have little capacity for grasping abstract ideas or clothing

them in language. But there have been instances even in modern history of men and women highly gifted who have found in Glossolalia an outlet for their deepest religious life. That it was so in the early church we can gather from the outstanding example of Paul.

It is in the light of Paul's discussion in 1 Corinthians xii.–xiv., that the true nature and significance of Glossolalia have to be determined. This discussion, more perhaps than anything else in his writings, illustrates the Apostle's wonderful sanity of judgment. Glossolalia, to the whole church of the time, was the most impressive fact in Christian worship, and was accepted as the cardinal proof of the divine origin of the Gospel. To excel in this extraordinary gift, which marked the man directly favoured by the Spirit, was the chief ambition of every believer. Paul does not doubt that the gift is supernatural, and is proud to declare that he has himself received it in exceptional measure; yet he recognises its inferior value. He counsels his converts to exercise it sparingly, and to set their hearts on other gifts, more useful though less imposing. Above all, he perceives that this gift, for all its specious appearance of coming direct from the Spirit, is not to be compared with the supreme gifts of faith, hope, love.

The chief fact on which Paul lays stress in his account of the tongues is that they are unintelligible, and it is from this point of view that he assesses their value. To hear them is like listening to an

unknown language, or to musical sounds which convey no tune. Paul will not say that for this reason the tongues are worthless, for the man who uses them receives a personal benefit. But it is not shared by those who listen to him. For Paul the believers in Christ constitute one body, the members of which are meant to serve one another, and the good of each must in some way contribute to the good of all. When it is brought to this test Glossolalia is found wanting. The thought in Paul's mind is something more specific than that gifts are valuable in proportion to the number they benefit. He starts rather from his conception of the Spirit as bestowed on the church, for the advancement of the church at large. When the individual alone is helped by its gift it misses its true object. The very nature of the Spirit demands that whatever it bestows on one should be communicated through him to all.

While he concludes, therefore, that the tongues must be accounted lower than certain other gifts, Paul admits that in three directions they have a real value. (1) The man who speaks in a tongue is himself edified, for God understands the words which for men have no meaning. The " tongue " is a spiritual language for speaking " mysteries "— that is to say, it gives expression to thoughts and aspirations which can utter themselves in this way and no other. The inarticulate sounds have all the value of intelligible prayer. Paul himself, as he tells us in the very chapter in which he criticises

the tongues, was in the habit of using them in his private devotions, although he refrained from them in the assembly.[1] He found that they afforded him a real outlet to pent-up feelings which he could not express in words. This is doubtless the meaning of the familiar passage in Romans :—" And in like manner the Spirit also helpeth our infirmity, for we know not how to pray as we ought, but the Spirit himself maketh intercession for us with inarticulate groanings; and he that searcheth the hearts knoweth what is the mind of the Spirit, because he maketh intercession for the saints according to the will of God." It is strange to think of the great Apostle in his personal communion with God employing this mode of prayer which to us may appear childish. No man has ever made such an effort to think out clearly the meaning of the Gospel; no man has had at his command a religious language so manifold and expressive. Yet he was aware that he could not define in words what he felt to be deepest in his religion. He could only fall back on that confused utterance of the Spirit, believing that God would understand.

(2) Again, he holds that though the tongues were unintelligible they were not without a value, even for the common worship. There were some in the assembly who could apprehend what was conveyed in them, obscure as they were to the " unlearned " (ἰδιῶται) from whom the higher endowments of the Spirit were withheld. In any

[1] 1 Cor. xii. 18, 19.

case, there were those who possessed the specific gift of "interpretation," and could explain in ordinary language what the speaker meant. It can fairly be surmised that in most cases the "tongues" did not signify anything very mysterious. The ideas which occupied the mind of the average Christian were few and simple, and the speaker would suggest by his tone of voice or by the special "kind of tongue" he employed, the contrition or thanksgiving or longing to which he strove to give utterance. There would be those present who by a natural tact and sympathy, trained by practice in this particular duty, would be able to discern at least the general drift of the spiritual language. Thanks to the gift of interpretation the church at large would participate in the message it conveyed.

(3) Once more, apart from all that they meant to the speaker himself and to his fellow-worshippers, the tongues had a value for the outside world. Paul indeed confesses that the sight of a Christian congregation engaged in this strange practice was apt to excite the mockery of unbelievers, who saw in it nothing but madness. None the less it was a "sign" to them, a proof that a divine power was at work in the church. They could take from it the warning that if they despised this Gospel they exposed themselves to the judgment of God. Not only so, but in some cases the marvellous exhibition would awaken faith in the unbeliever. He would recognise when in the presence of this inexplicable thing that the message was truly of God, and would

be persuaded to accept it. Paul is here, no doubt, reflecting on an experience which he must often have witnessed in the course of his missionary labours. Strangers were attracted to the Christian meeting by the fame of the Glossolalia. What was nothing at first but curiosity would often lead to interest in the Gospel, and sometimes to conversion. Many examples could be collected from the history of modern religious movements in which phenomena of the same kind have been a " sign " to the unbelieving world.

It is only in the discussion in 1 Corinthians, and perhaps in the verses quoted above from Romans, that Paul expressly deals with Glossolalia, although in many of his allusions to the Spirit and the spiritual gifts he clearly has this definite gift in view. It bulks so largely in the Corinthian letter because at Corinth there was a disposition to prize it unduly. Other activities which sprang equally from the Spirit, and which, in Paul's view, had more to contribute to the edifying of the church, were in danger of being sacrificed in favour of this more striking gift. Why the Glossolalia was so peculiarly prized at Corinth we have no means of knowing, and the reasons may have been merely local. At Thessalonica it would appear to have been unduly disparaged, and Paul finds it necessary to caution his readers not to " quench the Spirit." [1] This different attitude to the gift in communities that were founded about the same time, and were both composed of

[1] 1 Thes. v. 19.

Gentile converts, is evidence against the view that it was chiefly practised in Gentile churches and was probably of Gentile origin. That something akin to Glossolalia was not unknown in the Gentile world is indeed certain. A famous instance is that of the Delphian prophetess, whose cries were "interpreted" by attendant priests in a manner that reminds us of the Christian meetings. The shouts that accompanied the Bacchic celebrations were of a similar order. Celsus, as quoted by Origen, tells of Pagan fanatics "who utter unintelligible, crazy and jumbled words, the sense of which no one can make out, and which everybody interprets according to his pleasure." In numerous cults of the time some kind of Glossolalia was probably in vogue, and for this reason the practice may have found its way more readily into a community recruited, like that of Corinth, from a Pagan population. But the theory that it was borrowed from Paganism is quite unwarranted. Apart from the New Testament evidence which has already been considered, we can now see, with our larger knowledge of religious history and psychology, that the Glossolalia of the primitive church was by no means singular, and that it has repeated itself, almost invariably, under certain conditions. For that part, it was the very fact that it had arisen spontaneously that gave it such a significance for the early disciples. If it had been consciously borrowed the inferences that were drawn from it and which affected so profoundly the whole course of Christian

thinking would have been out of the question. But it had broken out of its own accord, in a manner that no one could trace or explain. For that reason it was regarded as supernatural. The church felt itself justified, in view of this wonderful phenomenon, in its belief that a new and mysterious power had been vouchsafed to it. What could this power be but the Holy Spirit, which God was to pour out on His people in the last days.

(3) *The Spiritual Ministry*

It is more than probable that only Glossolalia and kindred phenomena were at first attributed to the Spirit; but when the higher power had once been recognised its activity could not be limited to one peculiar phase in the life of the brotherhood. The belief grew up that since the Spirit had been given by Christ for the advancement of his cause it must be operative in all that belonged to Christian worship and enterprise. The church was distinguished from all other societies in that it was governed by the Spirit.

We have here a fact of fundamental importance for the understanding of early Christianity. There has been endless controversy as to the constitution of the primitive church, and the problem has been complicated by the natural desire of every later sect to see in itself the true representative of the Apostolic model. But most of the conclusions which have been reached from time to time have been

vitiated by a radical error. It has been assumed that the original church was similar in character to that which grew out of it, and was an organised body with an official ministry. The truth is, however, that the disciples rejected the very idea of organisation. An attempt was made, on the one hand, to perpetuate on a larger scale the fellowship which had begun in Jesus' lifetime, and the conviction that all were brethren appears to have led in the earliest days to a sort of communism. As the church grew in numbers this strict equality became impracticable, but it did not cease to be the ideal. In all its arrangements for worship and social life the new community sought to mark itself out as different from all societies of this world, in which there were rulers formally appointed and careful distinctions between class and class.[1] But this idea of equality, suggested in the first instance by the memories of Jesus' life-time, was reinforced from another side. The Spirit had now come in the place of Jesus. He himself had once presided over his company of disciples, but now that he was gone the Spirit directed them in his stead, and in the manner that he desired. Everything like organisation was therefore avoided as contrary to the inner nature of the church. It was the community of the Spirit, and must be willing in all things to order itself by that divine guidance.

The ideal was one that could not be realised, and the effort to press it too literally would have

[1] Cf. Luke xxii. 25, 26.

thrown the whole life of the church into hopeless confusion. Even in the first days several of the disciples, and especially Peter, seem to have taken on themselves an informal leadership, and little by little the church evolved an organisation even stricter than that of other societies. By the end of the first century its leaders had become officials, with their spheres of duty rigidly prescribed, and the belief that they were only organs of the Spirit had hardened into a mechanical theory. But at the outset the idea of spiritual control was taken seriously. The men to whom the direction of the church was entrusted were not officially appointed, but were men chosen directly by the Spirit.

From the first we hear of a co-operation on the part of the church in the selection of its workers and missionaries. It would often happen that several men would appear to be equally possessed of the spiritual gifts, and it was necessary to discover which of them the Spirit had chosen. Sometimes the church would make its decision in accordance with a prophetic announcement.[1] Sometimes the whole assembly would be moved spontaneously to declare itself in favour of particular men. But in such instances we are not to think of appointments made by formal election. The church confined its choice to men who were manifestly endowed with the Spirit, and aimed at nothing more than at ascertaining the Spirit's preference. It was assumed that the decision had been made

[1] Acts xiii. 2.

already, and all that remained for the church was to discover and ratify it. For this purpose all considerations that might arise from mere human wisdom were to be laid aside. The meeting was preceded by a fast, and began with solemn prayer for the guidance of the Spirit. From first to last the one object was to entrust the Spirit solely with the choice of the men who were to act as its instruments.

The primitive ideal was thus a ministry that should consist wholly of men endowed with spiritual gifts, so that the church should be controlled in all its enterprise by the power from above. Experience has now taught us that the men least fitted for the conduct of practical affairs are those in whom the enthusiastic qualities preponderate. We allow that ultimately the poet makes the nation's laws, that the thinker is a mightier force than the politician, that the man who looks steadily towards the final goal is in the long run a safer guide than the merely prudent man. Yet in practice we find it wise to distrust the idealist. Even in the government of churches a clear distinction is drawn between the man of eloquence or rare piety and the man of ruling, organising faculty. A too saintly Pope has usually meant disaster for the church. But in the early days the distinction, to our minds so obvious, was not made. The one claim to leadership, even in the practical affairs of the community, was the possession of " spiritual gifts."

The deference thus paid to men of the visionary

temper might have had serious consequences. There have been many later examples of sects that have run to sheer fanaticism, and have finally destroyed themselves, by accepting as their leaders wild enthusiasts who seemed to have a commission from heaven. But the church was saved from these extravagances by its wide application of the idea of the Spirit, which was supposed to manifest itself not only in tongues and prophecy but in "helps and administrations," in all capacities that were consecrated to the higher service. All Christians had their share in the Spirit, and the gifts imparted by it were theoretically all on the same level. This is the view that underlies Paul's conception of the church as the "Body of Christ." [1] He maintains that just as the manifold functions of the body are due to the same principle of life, so all the Christian activities have their origin in the one Spirit, and to that extent are equally valuable and necessary. Paul sought in this manner to ensure that those who were called to the humbler duties in the church should feel that they also were working for Christ, under the impulse of the Spirit. But while all the gifts were theoretically equal, it was recognised in practice that some were by their nature superior to others. Paul himself acknowledges this in the very chapter in which he describes the church as the Body of Christ. He sets out with impressing on his readers that they must not envy one another, since all

[1] Rom. xii. 5. 1 Cor. xii. 27. Col. i. 18. Eph. iv. 12.

gifts are bestowed by the one Spirit and are of equal worth; yet he proceeds at once to show how the gifts ought to be graded. The Corinthians have applied a wrong scale of values, and he provides them with tests whereby they may distinguish the lower endowments from the higher.

Before considering this valuation of the gifts it is necessary to guard against two possible misunderstandings of Paul's language. (1) He defines the gifts by three different terms which might seem to imply a difference in kind. "There are diversities of gifts (*χαρίσματα*) but the same Spirit; and there are diversities of administrations (*διακονίαι*) but the same Lord; and there are diversities of operations (*ἐνεργήματα*) but it is the same God who worketh all in all." It has often been supposed that Paul here makes a distinction between the charismata proper and activities which cannot be ascribed in the same direct manner to the Spirit. But when his language is examined more closely it becomes evident that he is only considering the same gifts from three different points of view, as proceeding from the Spirit, as advancing the cause of Christ, as giving effect to the will of God. It is to be noted that the amplitude of phrase is not merely rhetorical. Paul is about to offer his estimate of the several gifts, and declares that they cannot be judged aright unless account is taken of the whole purpose for which they are bestowed.

(2) Again, Paul seems to contemplate each

member of the church as possessing one peculiar gift, with which he must be content. But it is certain that the gifts were not distributed in this clear-cut fashion. Often it would happen that the man who excelled in Glossolalia would also have those other gifts of utterance which went with an ardent emotional temper, and sometimes he would take a leading part in the administration of the church as well as in its worship. Paul himself is the grand example of one who united many gifts, devotional and practical, in his own person. Some of the confusion in his valuing of the gifts is probably due to his effort to think of them distributed, like functions in the body. Now he places them in one order of worth, now in another. But the truth was that no such grading was possible, for each of them was invariably found in conjunction with others, and could not be judged abstractly by itself.

It was difficult, therefore, to estimate, or even to distinguish, the various gifts; yet there were three classes of "spiritual men" who were acknowledged to stand pre-eminent. In 1 Cor. xii. 28 they are singled out as the principal leaders in the church, and in Eph. iv. 11 they appear again in the same order—Apostles, Prophets, Teachers. The precise meaning of Apostleship has been much debated, and on our present evidence no definite conclusion can be reached. Was an Apostle, as Paul would sometimes appear to imply, one who had himself seen Jesus? Or was he one who had

been clothed with a special commission, and could therefore proclaim the message with a higher authority? For our present purpose, however, it is chiefly important to note that Apostleship, whatever else it involved, was a spiritual gift. It may be that this charisma was supposed to rest on immediate disciples, or on men who had been set apart in some particular way for arduous service; but these circumstances did not in themselves constitute an Apostle. There needed to be the "grace" imparted directly by the Spirit, and what it consisted in we are not told. Most likely it was so comprehensive in its nature that it could not be formally defined. It was the gift, or combination of gifts, which enabled a man to preach the word with power, to communicate his own faith to others, to act as a pioneer in the mission and control the churches he had founded. There are men in every society whose work is more effective than that of the others, and who assume the place of leadership as by a natural right. The reason of this power that manifestly resides in them cannot be explained, and the early church made no effort to explain it. The fact was simply accepted that certain men had the "gift of Apostleship" conferred on them by the Spirit, and this gift was recognised as the highest.

The second of the pre-eminent gifts was that of prophecy. This was a charisma in the narrower sense, and Paul couples it with Glossolalia, although he ranks it more highly since it took the form of

intelligible utterance. The man who spoke with tongues edified himself, while the prophet imparted the benefit to others. It may therefore be inferred that prophecy consisted in an ecstatic eloquence, of which the themes would be the mysteries of the future, the hope of the Lord's coming, the great verities of the Christian faith. The seer of Revelation calls himself a prophet, and perhaps has elaborated in his book the messages he had delivered from time to time in the assembly. Under the head of prophecy we may perhaps reckon the lofty passages which break in at intervals on the argument of Paul's Epistles, for example, the closing verses of Rom. viii., 1 Cor. xiii., parts of 1 Cor. xv. Few prophets would be capable of such inspired utterances, though it may well be that sometimes, in the prophetic rapture, even ordinary men gave splendid expression to their hopes and longings. Some of the half-lyrical outbursts which are incorporated in the New Testament, and which are apparently the earliest of Christian hymns, may have had their origin in prophecy. The prophet had an important place, not only in the church's worship, but in the direction of its affairs. Sometimes, like Agabus, he would predict the course of events, or, like Ignatius, would force hidden conditions into the light.[1] In all emergencies a peculiar weight was attached to his words. It was believed that through him as its mouthpiece the Spirit conveyed its warnings, and before making any

[1] Ign. Philad. vii.

grave decision the church waited for some prophetic word thrown out in the course of the public worship. This was at once accepted as a direct intimation of the divine will.

Next to Apostles and Prophets were ranked the Teachers. Their work must have been something more than that of mere instruction, or else it could hardly have been counted among the chief spiritual gifts. It may be inferred that "teaching" in the early church involved an element of revelation. The teacher was expected to unfold the hidden meaning of Scripture, with the aid of the Spirit which had inspired it. He not merely transmitted the facts of the Christian message but interpreted them in their deeper significance. A typical example of the work of the teacher is preserved to us in the Epistle to the Hebrews, the author of which lays hold of certain cryptic references in the Old Testament and finds in them the key to the meaning of Christ's death. It is possible that the Fourth Gospel is likewise written by a teacher who takes the historical facts of the life of Jesus and presents them in such a manner as to disclose their inner purport. The ordinary expositions of the Teachers would be on a very different level from these great writings, but would resemble them in so far as they seemed to proceed from a special enlightenment. Unlike the prophet, the teacher did not express himself in a sudden rapture, and to that extent was deemed to be less immediately touched by the Spirit. Yet for the patient reflection which gave

him insight into hidden truth he too required the higher illumination. His office, as we learn from the Epistle of James, was regarded as one of solemn responsibility, which no one could discharge without a manifest call.[1]

It is not necessary to examine in detail the nature and scope of all the spiritual gifts which Paul enumerates;[2] the discussion of them belongs to the general history of the Apostolic Age. It is enough to note that in Paul's view the Spirit is operative in all the activities to which Christians are called. Even in his own capacity for bodily self-control[3] he acknowledges a gift of the Spirit; and bids his readers think in like manner of all the special advantages they may enjoy. It has often been held that Paul was himself responsible for this wide extension of the sphere assigned to the Spirit, but there was nothing to indicate that his view was different from that of the church at large. When he declares[4] that everyone should bring some gift of his own to the common worship—a prayer, a psalm, a doctrine, an interpretation—he only commends the established practice. It was understood that every worshipper had his part in the Spirit, and ought to exercise his individual gift for the benefit of all. And the same rule applied even more decidedly, to the practical gifts. Men and women who could contribute little to the public worship were able at least to offer their

[1] James iii. 1. [2] 1 Cor. xii. 28. Rom. xii. 6 f.
[3] 1 Cor. vii. 7. [4] 1 Cor. xiv. 26.

help in the charitable duties of the church, and these also were prompted by the Spirit. As the mission extended, new needs and problems were constantly arising, and it was found that new capacities were drawn forth to meet them, as from an inexhaustible spring. This living energy which provided the means whereby all difficulties, however unforeseen, could be overcome, what could it be but the Spirit of God, vouchsafed to His church?

Before Paul, therefore, the conviction had taken root that all Christian activities, and not merely the charismata proper, were due to the higher power now working in the church. The Christian life, in its whole extent, was governed by the Spirit. But in one sense, as we shall see later, the widening of the conception was effected by Paul. He associated the Spirit not merely with particular acts but with the will and temper in which they were done. He believed that by the Spirit which Christ had given men were inwardly transformed, so that their thoughts and deeds were nothing but the fruits of a new nature wrought in them by a divine power. The whole Christian life, as Paul conceived it, was life in the Spirit.

(4) *The Spirit in the Community and the Individual*

As the gift of Christ to his people the Spirit, for New Testament thought, has its sphere of action in the Christian church. It is imparted in the baptismal rite whereby a man becomes a member of the community. Its most signal manifestations are at the meetings for common worship. Its work is all directed to the general welfare of the church, so that Paul, when he seeks to appraise the various gifts, brings them to the one test—"Do they edify? Do they further the interests of the whole community?" He compares the Spirit to the life which pervades the body, and insists that while it may act differently in the men and women who make up the church it is always one and the same.

The question therefore arises whether the Spirit is regarded as a communal or as an individual possession. Is it bestowed on individuals and through them on the church, or does it reside in the church as a whole, and so distribute itself among the persons who are included in the holy community? At a later time it was taken for granted that the church was the steward of the regenerating Spirit, and dispensed it to those who participated in the appointed rites and sacraments. This was the governing idea of that impressive theory of the church which was to mould the history of Christendom for a thousand years. In

its crude mechanical form the doctrine that "outside of the church there is no salvation" can certainly not be imputed to the New Testament writers, and yet there is much of their teaching in which it seems to find an anticipation.

It cannot be said that the communal view is prominent in the book of Acts. The Spirit is indeed regarded as Christ's gift to his church, and in a number of passages we are told how the church as a whole was sustained and prospered by it. But the emphasis is laid on the possession of the Spirit by particular men. Peter, Stephen, Barnabas are singled out as men filled with the Spirit, and even when it is described as acting on the whole assembly nothing more is implied than that all accepted the divine direction, as it was conveyed through some favoured prophet. The rite of baptism by which a man was incorporated in the church did not necessarily carry with it the gift of the Spirit. This is rather conceived as something additional, which was given directly from above. The idea of a special and individual endowment is indeed implicit in the Hebraic conception from which the writer of Acts sets out. He thinks of the Spirit as coming suddenly out of a higher world, breaking in on the normal course of a man's life, and making him equal to some divinely appointed task. Such a power cannot be regarded as inherent in the community and dispensed as a matter of course to all its members. As belonging to the church, men are qualified to receive the Spirit, which can only

be granted to the people of Christ. But it must be imparted to each of them individually, by a special grace.

With Paul the idea of the Spirit as vested in the whole body of believers is far more pronounced. The church in its totality is likened to a temple in which the Spirit dwells, as the divine presence was supposed to dwell in the temple at Jerusalem.[1] Again and again the Spirit is related to the whole Christian brotherhood. It is "we" as members of the church who have received the Spirit of adoption, and have been made to drink into one Spirit. The old covenant of the letter and the new covenant of the Spirit are contrasted, in the sense that the Spirit is the common possession of the church as the Law was of Israel. This aspect of Paul's thought comes out most clearly in his favourite conception of the church as the "body of Christ"—a single organism, ruled in all its parts by the Spirit. On the ground of this conception Paul is never tired of describing the Spirit as the principle which makes for unity in the life of the church. All share in it alike, and by this common participation are brought into fellowship with one another. On the other hand, Paul repeatedly speaks of the Spirit as given to individuals. It dwells in the church in so far as each member has received it, and Paul has reason to lament that in many of his converts it is still lacking, so that the church falls short of its ideal calling. In that same chapter of

[1] 1 Cor. iii. 16; cf. Eph. ii. 22. 1 Tim. iii. 15.

1 Corinthians in which he makes the church collectively the temple of the Spirit he desires that each of his readers should himself be its temple.[1] While he enlarges on his image of the church as the Body of Christ through which the Spirit diffuses itself, he insists on the diversity of its working in the manifold members. Above all, his account of the Spirit in its relation to the inward life cannot be understood from any view of it as a corporate possession. Again and again he describes the Spirit as dwelling in our hearts, witnessing to us that we are sons of God, assuring to each believer an immediate fellowship with the Lord. Ideas like these cannot be reconciled with a conception of the Spirit as vested in the community and passing in derivative fashion to those who compose it.

It cannot be doubted that Paul set a high value on the church—far higher than most of his expositors have realised. This was partly owing to his Jewish antecedents. For Old Testament religion it was Israel that was the object of God's favour, and this conception of the chosen nation has deeply coloured all Jewish religious thinking. Paul could not get away from the idea of the new Israel as parallel with the old, and so invested in the mass with exceptional privileges. But his estimate of the church depends, even more closely, on the strength of communal feeling in early Christianity. Jesus himself had formed a company of disciples, and had laid down a rule of life

[1] 1 Cor. vi. 19.

which required a society for its fulfilment. As time went on, and the Christians were more and more cut off from the world around them, they were thrown back on their own fellowship, and all action was judged by the standard of "brotherly love." Paul especially, by the nature of his work, was compelled to think in terms of the church. His converts consisted of little groups which maintained themselves with difficulty in the midst of great alien populations. Only as they held together, supporting one another in their new faith and practice, could the mission be kept alive. In all his letters Paul shows a watchful solicitude for Christian unity and impresses on his converts that their individual welfare is inseparable from that of all. His theological teaching is never far remote from his practical interest as a missionary, and we need not wonder that he develops his doctrine of the Spirit in its bearing on the unity of the church. The Spirit, as he conceives it, is given for the edifying of the body of Christ. By their participation in it all the members are bound together, and their activities, however diverse, are made to contribute to a common end. Not infrequently Paul would seem to think of the Spirit as something apart from individuals and residing in the church as a whole.

This conception, however, cannot be regarded as his vital and characteristic one. When he gives expression to his primary religious beliefs he forgets that he is a member of the church, and falls back

on the language of personal devotion; and this personal note is nowhere more striking than in his references to the Spirit. He rejoices in it as in the divine power which has renewed his life and given him strength and peace and illumination. He connects it ever and again with faith, which is the personal response to the grace of God in Christ. It is true that for Paul the church is something more than the aggregate of the men and women whom it includes. In the later phases of his thought he seems increasingly to attach a mystical significance to the " body of Christ," and from this point of view he regards the work of the Spirit. But he is saved from such mechanical theories as arose at a later time by his unfailing instinct for the realities of religion. He is conscious that the power which regenerates men and makes them strong in the service of God must have come directly from God Himself. It is noteworthy that in the subsequent period, when the ecclesiastical idea had begun to overshadow all Christian thought, the belief in the Spirit tended to disappear, or to have a merely formal value. From the outset it had been bound up with actual experience. Men had been aware of a new power imparted to them, awakening in them strange impulses and capacities which they had never guessed before. This sense of an immediate divine energy was lost when they had come to reverence an institution as the appointed channel of the higher life. The church continued to make much of the doctrine of the Spirit, and

founded its claims on the possession of this mysterious power, which had been bequeathed to it by Christ for the welfare of his people. But the Spirit had meaning only so long as it acted directly on men as individuals, and when they could not receive it except through the church and its ordinances they lost the feeling of its reality.

CHAPTER V

THE PAULINE DOCTRINE OF THE SPIRIT

(1) *Introductory*

As we pass from the earlier teaching to the theology of Paul the idea of the Spirit seems to undergo a transformation. For the primitive church the Spirit was simply a divine energy, which was communicated to men and made them capable of new and higher activities. Its typical mode of operation was in the extraordinary "gifts," which the mind of the time could not otherwise account for than as the visible effects of a supernatural power. The inference had indeed been drawn that the power which was manifestly at work in the charismata was also active in the whole life of the church. Christ had laid a tremendous task on his people, and had therefore endued them with a strength and wisdom which were not of this world. But in the earlier doctrine there is no thought of that mystical operation of the Spirit which is everything to the mind of Paul. The heavenly power, as he conceives it, is the source not merely of higher endowments but of a new life. By means of it men are inwardly changed; they are capable of new endeavour because their human nature has been

inwardly assimilated to the divine nature. It is not surprising that in this Pauline doctrine many have seen a complete departure from that simpler conception with which the church had set out. The Hebraic idea appears to give place to another, derived from Hellenistic mysticism.

There can indeed be no question that while Paul believed himself to be " an Hebrew of the Hebrews," he was far more affected than he knew by the ideas which were fermenting in the great Gentile world. That he had consciously adopted the teachings of Greek philosophy or of the new religions that were pressing in from the East is more than doubtful. The foreign influences made themselves felt not so much in definite aspects of his thinking as in a general attitude of mind which can at once be recognised as non-Jewish. It consists, if one might so express it, in a new conception of the *purpose* of religion. The " salvation " which had been foretold in the Old Testament and which the church now hoped to attain through Christ, was, in the last resort, a moral deliverance. It was associated with the thought of a " coming age " when sorrow and death and all the evils of the present world would be done away with; but these things were felt to be only the consequence of human sins. Released from their sins, men would be restored to God's favour, and would enter on that higher life for which they had been destined. Paul shared this belief with the earlier church, but did not rest satisfied with it. He had come to believe, with the Hellen-

istic thinkers, that men had failed not merely through a perversion of the will but because of a radical imperfection of their nature. As creatures of earth, encumbered with material bodies, beset with the manifold limitations of mortality, they were excluded from the higher life. What they required was a change in their very being, in virtue of which they might aspire to fellowship with God. This was the purpose of religion as embodied in the mystical cults of the time. All of them professed, by means of secret rites and the communication of a higher knowledge, to set man free from that bondage in which he was involved by earthly conditions. Their discipline certainly aimed at a moral purification, but escape from moral evil was only a means towards the great end of a change of nature—a transition from the earthly state of being to the divine.

There can be no doubt that this Hellenistic idea of Redemption has exercised a profound influence on the thought of Paul. He understood the moral demands of Jesus more fully and clearly than any other teacher. He never fails to recognise that fellowship with God implies a perfect obedience to the will of God. Yet he conceives of the moral change as accompanied by a change of nature, and as, in some degree, conditioned by it. In order to be sons of God in the sense that they are conformed to Him in mind and will, men must undergo an essential change. They must be wrought into affinity to the divine as contrasted to the earthly nature.

This Hellenistic bias in Paul's thinking must be taken into account when we seek to understand his doctrine of the Spirit; yet it does not follow that he breaks away from the primitive conception. All that he has done is to take up the idea which was current in the church and apply it to the new speculations. Greek thought, as we have seen, had arrived at its own conception of the Spirit as an all-pervasive aether, which was at the same time formative Reason. The Spirit as Paul knows it has nothing to do with this πνεῦμα of the Stoics. Its attributes, considered in themselves, are in no way different from those ascribed to it in the earlier Christian teaching. It is a power proceeding from God, acting under the direction of Christ and within the sphere of his church, imparting to men gifts and privileges which they previously lacked. But as he contemplates the work of this Spirit in the light of his Hellenistic ideas Paul thinks of it as effecting a radical change. It becomes for him the energy sent forth from God in order to work in our human nature and transmute it into something higher. Paul does not take up with a new doctrine of the Spirit. In this, rather, as in so many other aspects of his teaching, he avails himself of a genuine Christian idea and seeks by means of it to justify and explain his mysticism.

It is highly significant that with all his new speculations on the work of the Spirit he holds fast to the beliefs of the earlier church. For him, as for the Apostles before him, the charismata are the

evidences of a higher power, guiding and upholding Christ's people. He shows no consciousness that the Spirit in its mystical operation is in any way different from this strange energy that manifests itself in Glossolalia and prophecy. He makes much of his own possession of those gifts, and declares that the Spirit which has bestowed them dwells in him also as a regenerating power. We have no right, therefore, to make a separation of which he was himself unaware. The doctrine which he develops to such far-reaching issues had grown up in the early church under the influence of the marvellous phenomena. For this reason, if for no other, the study of his doctrine is peculiarly interesting and suggestive. We see how a conception which belonged, apparently, to a primitive phase of thought was unfolded in its larger possibilities, and was linked eventually to all that was central and permanent in the Christian revelation.

(2) *The Spirit and the Flesh*

The conception of the Spirit in Paul cannot be separated from that of the Flesh, which at every point stands over against it. We are not here concerned with the many difficult problems with which the Pauline doctrine of the flesh is entangled; but it is impossible to avoid some discussion of the doctrine itself.

The term "flesh" is used in the Old Teatsment to denote the earthly, perishable nature of man, in contrast to the eternal God. Man is composed of flesh, which is subject to pain and corruption and marks him as a created being, with limits out of which he must not pass. In the ancient story in Genesis God abridges man's span of life "because he is flesh," [1] and has therefore to be kept mindful of his helplessness. The Psalmists declare in many well-known passages that man's claim on the divine pity is his fleshly nature, which involves him in pain and misery.[2] The regular term to denote humanity in its utter weakness is "all flesh." But while flesh in the Old Testament is associated with human weakness it is not made responsible for *sin*. The needs and impulses of the senses are regarded as themselves innocent, and sin resides in the corrupted will, which fails to direct them to right purposes. For Old Testament thought, indeed, the flesh is the necessary condition of fulness of life; and it was this, more than anything else, which hindered the progress towards a clear belief in immortality. It was taken for granted that man's life was bound up with his fleshly body, and that when this was dissolved in death he became only a phantom of his real self. When Hebrew thought at last arrived at the belief in a future life it could only do so through a doctrine of resurrection. If man was to live again after death his body must be raised from the grave. The flesh had been the necessary basis

[1] Gen. vi. 3. [2] Ps. ciii. 14; lxxviii. 39; lxxiii. 26.

and organ of all his activities, and he could not exercise them again until it was restored to him.

Paul frequently uses the term "flesh" in a context suggested by the Old Testament and clearly indicating that this was the source from which he derived it; but in one all-important respect he breaks away from the Old Testament view. He conceives of the "carnal man" as not merely a weak but a sinful being. Sin has its roots in the fleshly impulses, and before the true life can appear the flesh must be destroyed. As a creature of flesh man is not only inferior to God but is by nature opposed to His will. "The mind of the flesh is enmity against God, for it is not subject to the will of God, neither indeed can it be; and they that are in the flesh cannot please God." [1]

It can hardly be questioned that on this side of his thought Paul is influenced by Hellenistic ideas. For the Greek thinkers the body is the grand obstacle to the higher life. All the evils with which man is beset are traced back to the imprisonment of his soul in matter, and the one aim set before him as a rational being is to free himself from the material bonds. This belief, to which Plato had given philosophical form, became intensified in the later period. Philo continually insists that evil has its source in the bodily impulses and passions. The mind of the age was moving towards the theory which finally gave rise to the Gnostic systems—that by some primal error the higher element had

[1] Rom. viii. 7, 8.

been ensnared in matter, and craved to be set at liberty.

In Paul's contrast of the Spirit and the Flesh there is certainly an approach to the Hellenistic mode of thought, but we have to reckon with an inconsistency which makes his position hard to determine. (1) On the one hand, many of his references to the flesh would seem to exclude the idea that it is inherently evil. "To know men after the flesh"[1] is simply to know them in their outward, as distinguished from their true and essential being. Christ himself can be known "after the flesh." The life of faith is compatible with "life in the flesh."[2] In a number of passages the flesh appears as a side of man's nature which may be brought into harmony with the higher requirements, as it could not be if it were radically evil. Men are to "cleanse themselves from defilement of the flesh and spirit";[3] they are to treat the body with due honour;[4] spirit, soul and body are all to be purified;[5] sin is no more to reign in the mortal body.[6] A still loftier ground is taken when Paul desires that the life of Christ is to be made manifest in the flesh,[7] and when he speaks of the body as the temple of the Spirit.[8] In all this series of passages he plainly regards the flesh as nothing else than the framework of the present earthly existence. It is something apart from the higher life and yet is

[1] 2 Cor. v. 16.
[2] Gal. ii. 20.
[3] 2 Cor. vii. 1.
[4] Rom. i. 24.
[5] 1 Thes. v. 23.
[6] Rom. vi. 7.
[7] 2 Cor. iv. 11.
[8] 1 Cor. vi. 15.

its necessary vehicle, and cannot be intrinsically evil. (2) On the other hand, there are certain outstanding passages in which Paul seems to adopt the view that sin and the flesh are inseparable, and that sin originates in the flesh. The argument in Rom. vii. 14–25 is grounded in the thought that since he is fleshly man cannot but obey the law of sin. At a later stage of the same argument the flesh is explicitly defined as "sinful," and its native antagonism to God is strongly affirmed.[1] Since the flesh, therefore, is the principle opposed to all right action, its destruction is the great Christian duty—the flesh must be crucified with its affections and lusts.[2] From this point of view the death of Christ is itself interpreted. Christ in his own Person destroyed the principle of the flesh in his death on the Cross, and by mystical union with him his people participate in his victory. The flesh is destroyed in them, and they are thereby liberated from sin.

Paul appears, therefore, to waver between two conceptions, one derived from Hebrew, and the other from Hellenistic thought. He regards the flesh as the necessary basis of man's life, and at the same time as a foreign and hostile element, which must be overcome before the true life can be attained. The attempt has often been made to reconcile these two estimates. It is contended that Paul thought of the flesh as in itself ethically indifferent, but liable to sin on account of its

[1] Rom. viii. 3–8. [2] Gal. v. 14.

weakness. Man is a composite being, and with his "mind," his higher personality, is disposed to obey the will of God; but sin, in its effort to master him, took advantage of that side of his nature which was weak and neutral.[1] It entrenched itself in the flesh, and henceforth infected the higher nature which was conjoined with it. That which at first was neutral became the "sinful flesh," and brought the whole man into bondage to sin. A theory of this kind may sufficiently explain some of Paul's utterances; but there are others in which he rests his whole argument on the inherent sinfulness of the flesh. He assumes that this element in man not merely afforded entrance to sin but was itself the active cause of sin. When the flesh is destroyed sin is destroyed. It is difficult to see what meaning Paul can have attached to his central doctrine of the destruction of the flesh by the death of Christ unless he held that the flesh is the principle of sin, and had not to be cleansed or strengthened but abolished. In view, therefore, of statements which are so plainly in conflict we are driven to the conclusion that Paul never fully thought out and unified his ideas about the flesh. Sometimes he adopts the Hebrew conception of an element in man's nature which marks his weakness, but which is yet the necessary condition of his life and needs to be guarded from evil. Sometimes, and here we have his more characteristic thought, he looks on the flesh from the Hellenistic point of view as itself the evil principle

[1] Rom. vii. 8 f.

in man. Redemption consists in nothing else than the deliverance from the flesh, which involves man in sin and death.

A similar inconsistency becomes apparent when we try to determine what Paul includes under his idea of the Flesh. Often he employs the word as a mere synonym for the body. The sin that dwells in the flesh is nothing else than the bodily appetites which interfere with the higher desires. It uses the members as its instruments, and is mastered when the body is " buffeted " and kept under control. But elsewhere the flesh is identical with the whole complex of thoughts and motives and desires which belong to the natural man. It is not a material substance but a condition of being to which all men are subject, and which is the same under all its manifestations. At times Paul seems almost to personify the flesh. He describes it as a hostile power which has held mankind in bondage, and from which we are henceforth set free by Christ.

Paul's doctrine of the flesh thus involves many difficulties and inconsistencies, but the main significance of his contrast between flesh and Spirit is sufficiently clear. He thinks of man as by nature " fleshly," and subject, for that reason, to a power which hinders his true life. It is either actively hostile, or at best indifferent, and encumbers and frustrates him in his moral struggle. As a creature of flesh he is the destined prey of sin and death. There is only one way in which he can escape from

his bondage. The principle of flesh must be overcome by a higher principle—the Spirit. The flesh belongs to this world, the Spirit proceeds from God. It carries with it the divine attributes of holiness, righteousness, immortality, and by means of it the lower nature is transmuted. The carnal man becomes a spiritual man.

Paul was thus able to construe the work of the Spirit without departing from that conception of it which he had received from the primitive church. He believed, like the first disciples, that a supernatural power was now operative, and was discernible in the new phenomena of Christian worship and the new Christian activities. But he ascribed to it a still larger potency. Not only did it supplement man's own nature, but changed it altogether. As the divine energy it counteracted that earthly principle which drags men back in their endeavour towards higher things. Possessed of the Spirit, a man is actively helped forward; the bias of his nature is towards righteousness as it formerly was towards sin. In attaching this deeper significance to the Spirit Paul was doubtless influenced, more than he knew, by Hellenistic thought. He conceived of the difference between divine and human as one not merely of will but of essence. He was haunted by the sense that no redemption was possible unless there was first a transformation, enabling the earthly nature to participate in the divine life. In this direction Paul revised the primitive conception of the deliverance wrought by Christ, but he did so

by means of an idea which the primitive church had given him. He identified the divine energy which lays hold of man's nature and subdues the fleshly principle with the wonder-working Spirit.

(3) *The Spirit and the New Life*

Through faith in Christ, as Paul is never weary of insisting, we enter on a new life, so different from the old that he can describe it simply as life, in contrast to a previous condition of death. He associates it with holiness and righteousness, and speaks at times as if it consisted in nothing else than the purer will, the moral likeness to himself which Christ communicates to his people. But it is evident that he contemplates something more than this moral renewal. He believes that by rising with Christ the convert has undergone some essential change—has become in a literal sense a new creature. For Paul the life which begins here and now in the act of faith is one with the life hereafter.[1] The real transition begins not in the moment of death but when a man enters in baptism on that immortal life which corresponds with the risen life of Christ.[2] He indeed admits that there is a difference between the life thus begun in the present and that which awaits us after death. For one thing, the true life, though we already possess it, is invisible until the flesh is finally laid aside and exchanged for a body

[1] Gal. vi. 8. [2] Rom. vi. 5 f.

of glory.[1] Life in the present, moreover, is lacking in fulness and reality. It is related to the life that shall be as the seed is to the ripened harvest.[2] The glory that is ours already will give place in the world to come to a transcendent glory.[3] But intrinsically the life on which the believer enters now is one with that which extends through death into the hereafter.

Paul therefore conceives of the Christian life as at once a new moral condition and a new state of being. The ultimate stress is laid on the moral renewal, but this has its ground for Paul in a quasi-physical change. The servant of Christ is capable of a perfect obedience because he has been transformed in the very constitution of his being. At times the change is described as taking place gradually. The Christian advances "from glory to glory."[4] While his outward man perishes his inward man is being renewed from day to day.[5] More often, however, it is supposed to come suddenly, and apparently in the definite act of baptism. At that moment the believer undergoes a change analogous to that which Christ passed through in his resurrection. He rises out of the carnal and earthly into the heavenly life. Paul is faced by the difficulty that after baptism the Christian remains, to all seeming, as he was before. The quality of his body is unaltered; he is still subject to earthly weakness and accident, and even to the inroads of sin. Nevertheless it is maintained that

[1] Col. iii. 3 f. [2] 1 Cor. xv. 36–44.
[3] Rom. viii. 18 f. [4] 2 Cor. iii. 18. [5] 2 Cor. iv. 16.

the life now lived in the flesh has become a different life.[1] This will be made apparent after death, when the believer will visibly display the heavenly nature which as yet is potential and hidden.

It is the Spirit which creates in men this new life. By nature they are flesh, incapable of the higher mode of existence, and a power from above must enter into them and subdue the fleshly nature. Paul does not, indeed, conceive of the change as a mere magical one. In the last resort it is morally conditioned since it is made possible by the act of faith, in which a man surrenders himself to the will of God. Not only so, but the Spirit is itself defined in ethical terms. Paul speaks of it constantly as the source of all moral excellence,[2] and in the great 13th chapter of 1 Corinthians he dwells on love as the supreme gift of the Spirit. He sums up the moral demands of Christianity as nothing else than "the law of the Spirit." In view of this insistence on the ethical fruits of the Spirit it has often been argued that Paul entirely broke away from the earlier conception of a purely supernatural power. But when we look more closely we cannot but feel that he retains it, although he informs it with new meaning. He thinks, like the primitive church, of a divine energy infused into men, but the distinctive attributes of God are for him the moral ones—love, goodness, wisdom, truth. These are inherent in the Spirit that comes from God, and manifest themselves in those who receive it. Men do not share in the

[1] Gal. ii. 20. [2] Cf. Gal. v. 16 f., 22.

Spirit by undergoing a moral transformation, but conversely :—the ethical change is consequent on the heavenly gift.

For Paul, then, the Spirit is a higher principle which lays hold of our nature and inwardly changes it—making it susceptible of a higher moral life. "The body is dead because of sin"—the sinful flesh is destroyed, and in place of it there is the Spirit which works for righteousness.[1] Except for its results in Christian action the new life remains hidden, but these results are proof of the radical change which has already begun and will at last be apparent. In this sense Paul describes the Spirit as the "earnest" (ἀρραβών) of the future life. Just as in human transactions a deposit is given as pledge of full payment, so God has guaranteed immortal life to Christ's people by His gift of the Spirit, which makes us partakers even now of divine privileges. The metaphor, however, only half expresses Paul's meaning, for the Spirit is not only the pledge of immortal life, but the active principle which implants and fosters it. Deposits are not always followed up by full payment, but the Spirit which is bestowed now is the certainty of life hereafter, since the Spirit is itself the life-producing power.

From the primitive church Paul thus took over a conception which enabled him to advance on earlier beliefs, and to re-interpret the meaning of Redemp-

[1] Rom. viii. 10.

tion. The church had hitherto conceived of Life as a blessing reserved for the future. It was taken for granted that in the present the believer shared in the common lot of men, with the one advantage that he was assured of a place in the new order which would be inaugurated on the Lord's return. This glorious hope was confirmed to the disciples by the phenomena which they ascribed to the Spirit. In the worship and all the work of their community they were aware of the coming of that power which, according to scripture, was to herald the new age. Paul declared that this operation of the Spirit had a still higher significance. It had its outcome not only in prophecy and speaking with tongues but in a new will, a new rule of thought and action. Such fruits of the Spirit were evidence of a new life. They proved that those who received the divine power had undergone an essential change, and were no longer mere creatures of earth. In Hebrew thought there was nothing that corresponded with this idea of a life different in kind from that which now is, and at this point we discern the Hellenistic strain in Paul's religion. But he expounds his mystical doctrine with the aid of the Hebraic conception which he had taken over from the primitive church. The Spirit which imparts the new gifts becomes for him the creative energy which produces the new life.

(4) *The Spirit and the Resurrection*

The new life is always associated in Paul's mind with the rising of Jesus from the dead. By his resurrection Jesus passed into a higher mode of being, and through union with the risen Lord the believer undergoes a similar change, although its nature will not be fully manifest until the body as well as the inward life is renewed.

Paul's conception of this future life in which the work begun by the Spirit will be consummated is set forth at length in the 15th chapter of 1 Corinthians. Throughout this great chapter, in spite of the rush of eloquence and the compelling ardour of conviction, we cannot but be sensible of an inconsistency—due to the attempt to fuse together two modes of thought which are radically different. (1) On the one hand, Paul takes his stand on the Jewish conception of a future life which is only possible through a rising again of the body. It was assumed by Hebrew thought that in order to be real, life must be physically conditioned. Without his body man loses all force and substance and becomes a mere wandering ghost. (2) On the other hand, for Greek thought the body was the grand impediment to true life. Man is essentially a reasoning soul, and the soul is thwarted in its proper activities by the bodily needs and passions. Only when he escapes from the tomb of the body does man achieve his liberty and enter on the full exercise of

his being. It may be gathered from the chapter that Paul's opponents at Corinth held to this view, which had been impressed on the Greek mind by centuries of philosophical teaching, and that they ridiculed the belief in a bodily resurrection, which the church had inherited from Judaism. Paul refuses to give up the traditional belief. With his Jewish instincts he feels that Life without a body is unthinkable, and this feeling is reinforced by his confidence in the resurrection of Christ. It may be, too, that behind all other considerations there is the sense that a body is the pledge and the necessary basis of individual existence. The Greek view undoubtedly tended to the denial of any personal identity after death. It had its logical issue in the belief that the immortal element in man was the principle of reason, which would be re-absorbed into the universal reason from which it had temporarily been severed. Immortality for Paul had no meaning or religious worth unless it was personal, and he demands a body as the indispensable condition of the new life.

By his own pre-suppositions, however, Paul was impelled towards the Greek view, and, it might seem, committed to it. He starts from the assumption that the flesh, if not radically opposed, is at least alien to the divine order—an element in man's nature which subjects him to sin and death. In the very chapter in which he upholds the belief in a resurrection he speaks of the flesh as the seat of corruption, and therefore destined to perish. How,

then, does he reconcile his view of the body as needful to the future life with the conviction that being of flesh it is bound up with mortality? He does so by contending that although a body will be the organ of the new existence it will not be that which was laid in the grave. The natural body will give place in the resurrection to a "spiritual body."

The meaning of this term has been much debated. On the face of it, a "spiritual body" might seem to imply a body composed of spirit, just as the earthly one is composed of flesh. But to interpret Paul in this sense would be to impute to him a conception quite foreign to his thought. For him, as for ancient thinkers generally, the Spirit is imparted as a kind of essence, and is, so far, material; but invariably he speaks of it in terms of *power*. A body composed of Spirit would have been unthinkable to him, as it is to us. The clue to his meaning is afforded us in his contrast of a "natural" (ψυχικόν) and a "spiritual" body. It is here implied that the present body belongs to the ψυχή—has been designed as the appropriate organ of the mere animal soul. The body of the future will be fitted to be the vesture of that higher life which is quickened in us by the Spirit. Elsewhere Paul describes it as a "body of glory,"[1] by which he appears to mean an ethereal substance of the nature of light. He speaks of the risen Christ as clothed with such a body. The apparition of light which he encountered on the way to Damascus was, he believed, that glorious

[1] Phil. iii. 21.

body of Christ; and he looked for a time when our corruptible bodies would be changed into the same likeness. The Spirit dwells in us even now and has inwardly transformed us, but we are still housed in the body of flesh, which conceals and obstructs the higher life. In the hereafter we shall possess a body adequate to the needs of the Spirit.

Some passages in 1 Cor. xv. would seem to suggest that the "spiritual body" is latent in the earthly one, and grows out of it like the plant from the seed. But in 2 Cor. v. 1–4 it is described as a "tabernacle" waiting for us in heaven. The earthly tabernacle is thrown off, once for all, in the hour of death, and is exchanged for this new dwelling-place. That Paul here expresses his genuine view is apparent from the whole tenor of his thought in 1 Cor. xv. He acknowledges that the body which we now have is perishable in its nature, and can have no other destiny than corruption. His argument rests throughout on the belief that while a body is necessary to a full personal life, in the next world as in this, the present body must give place to another. "This corruptible must put on incorruption."

Paul conceives of the future life, then, as consequent on the change effected in the believer by the Spirit. As to the fate of unbelievers, in whom the Spirit has not wrought the mysterious change, he says nothing, and, so far as we can gather, he regards their death as final. Greek thought allowed for a natural immortality, involved in the possession by all men of the rational principle. Jewish thought,

for the most part, contemplated a resurrection both of the just and unjust. But Paul takes his stand on the fact that man is by nature flesh, which is subject to death, and cannot live again unless he is raised up from this state of death. A power has to be imparted to him which counteracts the flesh, and this quickening Spirit can only come through faith in Christ.

The resurrection, therefore, is the necessary sequel of the new life which comes into being here and now through the action of the Spirit. The people of Christ are changed from carnal into spiritual men, and their nature has thus become immortal. In spite of physical death they continue to be, and are finally invested with bodies which are the fit instruments of the higher life which has been formed in them. It is not a little remarkable that in his references to the act of resurrection Paul leaves the Spirit out of account. When Ezekiel tells of the dry bones changing again into living men he makes the Spirit breathe into them and restore them. The Psalmist conceives of God as sending forth His Spirit, and so renewing the pulse of life from generation to generation. In view of such Old Testament suggestions we might have expected that Paul, too, would have ascribed to the Spirit some direct part in the process of resurrection. Perhaps he refrains from doing so because of his profoundly inward conception of the working of the Spirit. It effects the renewal now, in man's inward life, and the actual resurrection is nothing but the inevitable outcome

of this renewal. " If the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwelleth in you, he that raised up Jesus from the dead shall quicken also your mortal bodies because of his Spirit that dwelleth in you." It is the inward man who is transformed by the Spirit, and this hidden change involves the miracle which is wrought hereafter in the mortal body. Resurrection is indeed effected by the Spirit, but by the Spirit as it works invisibly in the life of faith.

(5) *The Spirit and Baptism*

How the rite of Baptism had found entrance into the church cannot, with our present knowledge, be determined. It does not seem to have been enjoined by Jesus himself, yet almost from the outset it was practised by his followers. Most probably they took it over from John the Baptist, whose movement was linked with the later one more closely, perhaps, than we should gather from our records. The church, however, attached a new significance to the Johannine rite. John himself, according to our Gospels, had contrasted his baptism of water with a baptism by the holy Spirit to be bestowed by the greater one who should succeed him. The contrast in his mind was apparently that of prelude and reality. He offered his cleansing as an earnest of the true purification which would follow the outpouring of the divine power at the commencement

of the new age. Perhaps from the first Christian baptism was associated with this hope which John had awakened. Again and again in the book of Acts the new ordinance is described as the fulfilment of John's baptism—similar to it outwardly, but fraught with a higher efficacy.[1] The Messiah had now come, and in his name men were baptised not with water only but with the Spirit. At first, however, this connection with the Spirit was ill-defined, and we have seen that in the earlier narrative of Acts the Spirit is sometimes given before baptism, sometimes after it, while occasionally it seems to be apart from it altogether.

The whole question is complicated by the singular episode of Apollos and certain disciples at Ephesus who had received the baptism of John, but had not yet heard of the coming of the holy Spirit.[2] On this passage—one of the most obscure and difficult in New Testament history—no satisfactory light has yet been thrown; and it may be that the author of Acts has misunderstood or confused the facts. Were the Ephesian disciples Christians, as he would seem to suggest? If so, they must have represented a phase of Christian belief so primitive that it went back to the days before Pentecost. Believing on Jesus they had not even heard that there was a holy Spirit—*i. e.* that the promised Spirit had now been vouchsafed to the church. That such a type of Christianity can have existed is hardly credible.

[1] Acts i. 5, 22; x. 37; xi. 16; xiii. 24 f.
[2] Acts xviii. 25; xix. 1–4.

According to another possible view, the Ephesian disciples were attached to the new religion in a non-Pauline form. The baptism they practised was allied with a more primitive type of teaching, and was wanting in the significance which it had assumed in the Pauline communities. This, however, would not explain the complete ignorance on the subject of the Spirit. Belief in the Spirit, as all our evidence proves, was no peculiar tenet of Pauline Christianity. It was cardinal to the life and worship of the church everywhere, and no Christians, however ignorant or conservative, can have left it wholly out of account. So we are almost shut up to the conclusion that Apollos and his friends were not Christians but followers of John the Baptist. As yet they only knew of the Kingdom of God as John had foreshadowed it, and practised a baptism in which no place was given to the cleansing activity of the Spirit.

From the first the idea of the Spirit was vaguely connected with baptism, but the church hesitated for some time before it declared that the heavenly gift was definitely bestowed through the rite. The eventual blending of the two conceptions may be traced back to various causes. (1) It was doubtless due, in some measure, to a real experience. The moment of baptism was one of peculiar solemnity to every earnest convert—marking, as it did, a sharp break with the past and the entrance on a new career. In this decisive act old sins were supposed to be

washed away. A long course of discipline had led up to it, and the rite itself was surrounded with every circumstance that could make it impressive. No one could undergo it without a strong emotion, a sense of intimate relation with a higher world. This feeling would usually express itself in one or other of those ecstatic phenomena which were attributed to the Spirit; and the rapture which thus displayed itself seemed capable of only one explanation. The convert, in his baptism, had received the gift of the Spirit, which enabled him now to prophesy and speak with tongues. (2) By baptism a man was accepted as a member of the church—of the community in which the Spirit was operative. Henceforth he could feel that he shared in all the privileges that belonged to the church as a whole. As he joined with his brethren in the common worship he knew that he, too, was called on to exercise his peculiar gift. How and when had it been conferred on him? Surely in that moment when by the act of baptism he had been incorporated in the spiritual community. (3) Something may have been due to reflection on the baptism of Jesus. According to the Gospel tradition it was then that the Spirit had descended on him, and had set him apart for his Messianic office. The inference was a natural one that an experience, similar in its degree, was repeated in the baptism of his followers. In Luke's account of the Baptism Jesus is described as receiving the Spirit when he had come out of the water and was praying;[1] and

[1] Luke iii. 21.

it can hardly be doubted that the evangelist has here before his mind the customary practice of the church. After the baptismal ceremony the convert offered his prayer of thanksgiving and self-dedication. The consciousness of a divine call awoke in him, and he felt the contact of the same Spirit, which had descended in like circumstances on the Lord himself. (4) The influence of Hellenistic ideas may at this point be confidently surmised. All the contemporary religions centred in a sacred rite, which was supposed to effect a marvellous change; and Gentile converts inevitably thought of baptism in the light of those ideas with which they were familiar. It was acknowledged that in Christianity a man was renewed; he was set free from all past sins and became spiritual instead of carnal. How could this mysterious change have come about except through a regenerating rite? The act of baptism was singled out as that which effected the transformation. In later baptismal doctrine the influence of the Hellenistic mode of thought was decisive, but from this we cannot argue, with some modern writers, that baptism first acquired its mystical significance as a result of the Gentile mission. The alien ideas served only to develop, in a peculiar direction, beliefs that can be traced back to John the Baptist, and through him to Old Testament prophecy. The Messiah was to baptise with the Spirit—with the heavenly power which God would pour out on his people in the last days. This Hebrew conception now adapted itself to Gentile

modes of thinking, but was the underlying motive in all baptismal theory.

For Paul, then, baptism marks the moment in which the Spirit is vouchsafed to the believer, and as such it has a twofold import. (1) On the one hand, it cleanses from sin and effects the renewal which is the necessary condition of the higher life. "Ye were washed, ye were sanctified, ye were justified, in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and in the Spirit of our God." [1] Paul is here careful to make clear that what gives value to baptism is not some magical quality residing in the element, but the invocation of Jesus; yet he implies that by this the rite itself acquires a compelling virtue. It brings into play the divine Spirit, which takes possession of the convert and changes him into a new man. The thought is repeated more emphatically in a passage of the Epistle to Titus, which represents the Pauline teaching, though it cannot be set down to Pauline authorship. "According to his mercy he saved us, through the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Spirit, which he poured out upon us richly." [2] The change effected by the Spirit is here described, under the image so familiar to later thought, of an actual new birth.

(2) On the other hand, as he undergoes a change within himself, so the convert is united in baptism with the holy community. The Spirit which is given him through the ordinance is that which per-

[1] 1 Cor. vi. 11. [2] Tit. iii. 5.

vades the church, and knits all the members into one body of Christ. Paul has much to say of the love which makes the people of Christ one brotherhood, but it must not be forgotten that he conceives of this love as itself made possible by the presence in all Christians of a common principle of life. "For in one Spirit were we all baptised into one body, whether Jews or Greeks, whether bond or free, and were all made to drink of one Spirit."[1] In this passage, perhaps more clearly than anywhere else, Paul betrays his conception of the Spirit as an actual essence, which effects an almost physical change. "We were all drenched (ἐποτίσθημεν) in the one Spirit." The water becomes for him a sort of visible type of another element with which it co-operates. The man immersed in it is also bathed in the Spirit, which is poured forth on the church of Christ.

At the same time he is anxious to free the Christian ordinance from those merely magical ideas which were read into it so easily by Gentile converts, newly emerged from heathenism. He makes the one baptism inseparable from the one Lord and the one faith. Ever and again he insists that it is faith which gives value to baptism and makes it effective. His conception appears to be that the work begun in faith is brought to a head in the visible rite, which is like a seal on the inward process. This final signature is necessary to the full validity of the act of faith, but by itself is empty and meaningless. For this reason he can speak of baptism in terms which suggest a

[1] 1 Cor. xii. 13.

certain disparagement. "I thank God that I baptised none of you . . . for Christ sent me not to baptise but to preach the gospel." [1] His mission was to awaken the faith which was the primary condition of the true life, and he left others to perform the outward rite.

We have always to remember the difficulty under which Paul laboured in view of the failure of the ancient mind to distinguish clearly between moral and religious and what we should now recognise as physical ideas. He could not free himself from the conviction that powers and influences which acted directly on the moral nature involved the transmission of some real essence. This confusion may have been enhanced for Paul by the Hellenistic atmosphere in which he worked; but this must not be accepted as the whole explanation. In Hebrew thought, as well as in Pagan, the powers that act on the inward life are conceived realistically. The Holy Spirit whereby a man is brought into fellowship with God is in the last resort a supernatural essence. It was this Hebrew tradition, no less than the Hellenistic influences around him, which constrained Paul to throw an emphasis on the act of baptism. The regenerating Spirit, for him as for the prophets, was in some sense a substance, and had to be communicated by a material rite.

[1] 1 Cor. i. 14 f.

(6) *Faith and the Spirit*

From the outset the Spirit was associated in the mind of the church with faith. Men like Stephen and Barnabas are described in the early chapters of Acts as " full of faith and the Spirit "—distinguished at once for ardent belief in the Gospel and for charismatic gifts. With Paul, however, both faith and the Spirit have come to signify much more than for the primitive church. Faith is no longer the mere belief in Jesus as the Messiah, but the response on man's part to the love of God revealed in him, and especially in his Cross. It is the attitude of receptivity which answers to the free grace of God, and apart from which God cannot effect His redeeming purpose. The Spirit, likewise, is more than the power which manifests itself in extraordinary gifts. It brings about the mysterious change whereby the earthly nature is assimilated to the divine. It abides in Christian men as the source of all their new impulses and activities. Faith and the Spirit are nothing less than the two cardinal conceptions in Paul's interpretation of the Christian message. How does he relate them to each other?

They are constantly mentioned together, but it becomes apparent, as soon as we try to analyse them, that they belong to different spheres of religious thought. Faith is a moral act, in which all that is deepest in a man's own nature responds to the call of

God. The Spirit is a supernatural power which a man receives from without, and which gives him something which he does not possess in himself. The emphasis on faith involves the conviction that men will find their way to God through the awakening of their own better will. Belief in the Spirit is ultimately grounded in magical or mystical religion. It implies that men in themselves are helpless and can only be saved by an influx of power from above. As a matter of historical fact the two fundamental conceptions of Paul have given rise to the two divergent types of Protestant and Catholic Christianity; but in Paul himself they stand side by side. Salvation is for him the result of faith co-operating with the Spirit.

It is Paul's effort to do justice to both his conceptions which makes his thought appear so often inconsistent, and lays it open to such varying interpretations. According to one view, which has held the field since the Reformation, the Pauline Gospel is rooted throughout in the principle of faith, and is substantially at one with the moral and religious teaching of Jesus. According to another, which has found many advocates in recent years, it has its real affinities with the Hellenistic cults, and dissolves the teaching of Jesus in mystical and sacramental beliefs which were alien to him. These opposing views can both be supported by numerous passages in the Epistles. The Apostle takes his departure sometimes from the idea of faith, sometimes from that of the Spirit; and his whole theology assumes a

different character according as we regard one or other of these as primary.

It might be inferred from some passages that he thought of faith as produced by the Spirit. More than once he enumerates faith among the spiritual gifts,[1] but the reference is obviously to the dynamic faith which is nothing else than a strong confidence in God. Occasionally, however, Paul seems to attribute faith, in the more specific sense, to the action of the Spirit. "We through the Spirit wait for the hope of righteousness by faith." [2] "We by the same Spirit of faith" [3] make our confession. The faith whereby we yield ourselves to Christ is something more for Paul than an act of our own. God has Himself fore-known and predestined those who will believe, and our faith has saving power behind it because it is thus rooted in the divine will. With his profound sense of this mystery in the act of faith, Paul can speak of it at times as the work of the Spirit.

More often, however, he conceives of the Spirit as brought into operation by faith. On our part there must be a turning to God, an opening of the heart to the divine influences, and until we have complied with this condition God can do nothing. The Spirit is only vouchsafed to us when our faith has responded to the offered grace. Our act of will affords entrance to the divine power, which works henceforth on our earthly nature and transforms it.

[1] 1 Cor. xii. 9; xiii. 2. 2 Cor. viii. 7.
[2] Gal. v. 5. [3] 2 Cor. iv. 13. Cf. 1 Cor. xii. 3.

On this thought the Epistle to the Galatians may be said to hinge. Paul dwells in this Epistle on the need for a radical change, and shows that it cannot be effected by the Law, which proclaims the divine will only to overwhelm us with the sense of our own impotence. Nothing can suffice but a regeneration of our nature, and this must be accomplished by the Spirit, which is given in response to faith. Paul appeals to the actual experience of his Galatian converts, who had first become conscious of the Spirit helping them when they were moved to faith in Christ. He shows that ever since the beginning it has been God's purpose that men should "receive the promised Spirit by faith." [1] The Law has never been more than an interlude, and now its task has been accomplished. We have attained through faith to the higher condition in which we are governed wholly by the Spirit.

Paul's characteristic view is, therefore, that the action of the Spirit is consequent on faith; but it must be remembered that faith is something more for Paul than a single initial act. It is the constant mood of the believer, so that life in the Spirit can be described, almost in the same breath, as a life of faith.[2] The new life is conceived, on the one hand, as bestowed by a mysterious divine power, and, on the other, as springing from within out of a new will, actuated by faith, instead of by trust in ourselves and in works of the Law. Paul does not seem to be aware of any inconsistency when he makes this life

[1] Gal. iii. 14. [2] Gal. ii. 20.

of faith the same as the new supernatural life. His blending of the two ideas may be partly explained from the confusion of primitive Christian with Hellenistic modes of thought; but it is due, in still greater measure, to the union in the Apostle himself of a strongly ethical with a profoundly mystical temper. He felt at once that the new will was everything, and that along with the new will there must be an access of power from above. In the last resort he could make no distinction between that which arises out of a man's own deeper self and that which is given him from God. Faith, the supreme expression of the personal will, is inseparable from the action of the Spirit. At the heart of all religions there is something of this same feeling that what is most intimately our own is at the same time given to us. The heavenly power to which we look for assistance is also the deepest reality in our own souls. It is this conviction which underlies the teaching of Paul, and which breaks out from time to time in words that touch the ultimate springs of religion. "The Spirit beareth witness with our spirits that we are children of God. And he that searcheth the hearts knoweth the mind of the Spirit, because it makes intercession for the saints according to the will of God."

(7) *The Spirit and the Law*

It was mainly in consequence of his historical position that Paul defined Christianity in terms of

its contrast to the Law. As a Jew he could not but dwell on those aspects of the new teaching which marked its difference from his former religion. He was opposed, too, during his whole missionary career by those who sought to subordinate the Gospel to the Law, and the task was forced on him of proving its superiority. The prominence which he gives to the Law was therefore, in great measure, the result of accident; and after the first generation, when his victory was won, the Law falls almost completely out of sight.

None the less, the contrast which meets us everywhere in the thought of Paul was an essential one. It was a fortunate accident that compelled Christianity in its earliest period, when it was still in doubt as to the formulation of its message, to take its stand over against Judaism. The two religions sprang from the same root, and resembled each other so closely that to this day the younger one can be plausibly explained as nothing but a development or revision of the older. Yet the general resemblance, as Paul perceived, serves only to bring out, in stronger relief, the central difference. The two religions, so closely allied, rest on quite opposite motives, opposite conceptions of man's relation to God.

Paul expresses the difference by contrasting Christianity and Judaism as the covenant of the Spirit and the covenant of the letter.[1] His meaning is that Judaism imposes a given rule, which men are

[1] Rom. ii. 27 f.; vii. 6. 2 Cor. iii. 6 ff.

called on to obey; Christianity bestows a power, which issues of its own accord in all right action. It follows from this fundamental difference that Judaism seeks to effect its purpose by a method of restraint. The things forbidden are pointed out in the Law, and men are held back from them by fear of penalty. Christianity communicates a positive impulse. It inspires men with motives and capacities which had previously been lacking. They are no longer pre-occupied with the painful avoidance of evil, since their nature is wholly directed towards the service of God.

Paul is not content, however, with showing that the new religion is different in principle from the old, and has succeeded where it failed. He declares that the Law is not merely futile but mischievous; "the letter killeth."[1] The immediate reference is to the threat of death to the transgressor by which the injunctions of the Law are often accompanied, but something more than this is evidently in the Apostle's mind. He has known, by his own experience, that the Law creates a sense of impotence and despair. It drives home to men the conviction that the obedience which the Law demands is hopelessly beyond them, and that they can look for nothing but condemnation. The will is paralysed, and is even forced into rebellion. But in contrast to the "letter which killeth" the Spirit "gives life." Proceeding from God it quickens in men the divine life which has its fruits in righteousness.

[1] 2 Cor. iii. 6.

It was urged against Paul's teaching, even in his own day, that his rejection of the Law meant the undermining of the moral sanctions. Whatever its shortcomings the Law had been ordained by God as a barrier against sin, and men were now invited to do evil that good might come.[1] One of Paul's chief purposes in writing the Roman Epistle was to answer these objections. He argues that under the reign of faith morality is still secure, and cannot indeed be safeguarded in any other way. For now the Spirit takes the place of the Law. It is a power for righteousness working from within—a living energy instead of the dead mechanism of a written code. So far from destroying morality, the new religion has now made it possible for the first time to overcome the lower nature and follow out the will of God. Walking in the Spirit we are set free from the lusts of the flesh.[2]

Paul's attitude is ultimately the same as that of Jesus, who also insists that the moral life must begin with an inward renewal. The Law with its prescribed rules, ineffectual at the best and liable to endless evasions, is not enough. True obedience to God must be inward and spontaneous and unreserved. But while Paul is at one with Jesus in his fundamental conception the difference is significant. What Jesus demands is an absolute trust in God, whereby the will that is in man is brought into harmony with the divine will. Paul changes this renewal of the will into a supernatural process.

[1] Rom. iii. 8, 31; vi. 1. [2] Gal. v. 16.

He maintains that a power from above must take possession of men, who will then exercise love and righteousness because these are attributes of the divine nature. Paul's teaching is everywhere complicated by this mingling of ethical with semi-physical ideas. He contrasts the Law, not only with the new will from which right action proceeds as from an inner spring, but with a new life-giving principle, implanted in us by God

(8) *The Spirit and Revelation*

In the Old Testament the Spirit was associated, in a special manner, with prophecy. No one could doubt that the ecstasy of the prophet was due to spiritual possession, and the words he uttered were ascribed to the mysterious power which was using him as its instrument. When prophecy had emerged from its earlier phase, and was no longer marked by a visible frenzy, the prophet still claimed to be the organ of the Spirit. It was the accepted belief in the later Old Testament period that the Spirit was the source of all revelation, and the belief had been crystallised in a formal doctrine of inspiration. The ancient writings were collected as a sacred book, which was now reverenced as the authentic deliverance of the divine will. Scriptural quotations were introduced by the conventional phrase "the Spirit saith"; and the assumption which underlay this formula was largely responsible for

the eclipse of the doctrine of the Spirit in the centuries before Christ. Men ceased to look for prophets who should impart new messages from God, for it was believed that the whole mind of the Spirit had already disclosed itself in the holy book.

The conception of the Spirit as the source of revelation was reinforced by Hellenistic influences. Behind the invocations familiar to us in Greek poetry from Homer downwards there lay a real conviction that the poet or sage was possessed for the time being by a divinity, who instilled into him a higher wisdom. "God takes away the minds of the poets and uses them as his ministers, and he also uses diviners and holy prophets, in order that we who hear them may know that they speak not of themselves who utter these priceless words in a state of unconsciousness, but that God is the speaker, and that through them he is conversing with us. For in this way the god would seem to indicate to us and not allow us to doubt that these beautiful poems are not human or the work of men, but divine and the work of God; and that the poets are only the interpreters of the gods, by whom they are severally possessed." [1] In the later philosophy this idea of inspiration is developed into a mystical theory. Philo has described in several well-known passages how his thoughts and even the language in which he clothed them were wont to come to him apart from his own effort, by the influx of a divine spirit. It may well be that he regarded his

[1] Plato "Ion:" Jowett's Translation.

whole teaching in the light of revelation. The scriptures which he expounded had been given by God, and were pregnant with hidden meanings, which he was able to penetrate with the assistance of a higher power.

All the Hellenistic thinking of the time was determined by an idea similar to that which finds expression in Philo. The splendid confidence of the great philosophical period had been followed by a disillusionment, and men were growingly conscious that reason by itself was powerless to spell out the mystery of the world. But it was believed that under certain conditions men could receive by revelation what they could never discover by any mere logical process. Human reason might constitute itself the organ of the divine reason. Hence arose the conception of Gnosis, which meets us everywhere in Hellenistic thought. The " knowledge " which it implies is distinguished from ordinary knowledge alike in its objects and in its methods. It is directed to " mysteries "—the secrets of the unseen world, the mode and purpose of creation, the destiny of the soul, the being of God. And since it is concerned with those transcendent things which are plainly beyond the scope of reason, it is no mere intellectual activity. The " Gnostic " is admitted to the divine counsels in virtue of an immediate enlightenment from above.

It can hardly be doubted that Paul holds a theory of Gnosis which finds its counterpart in the Hellenistic one; but at this point we must be especially

careful to mark his affinities with the primitive Christian tradition. From the outset the idea of the Spirit had been closely connected with that of revelation. According to the Old Testament, it had been the Spirit which divulged the will of God to the prophets; and in the church the phenomena of prophecy had repeated themselves. Men and women were thrown into ecstatic moods by the inrush of a divine power, and under this influence delivered messages from God. At the beginning these prophetic intimations were of very diverse nature. The prophets of whom we hear occasionally in the book of Acts were men who had insight into the future, and offered practical counsel to the church in critical junctures. In the Gospels it is promised that the Spirit will put fitting words into the mouth of Christians who are on trial for their faith. But there were spiritual utterances of another and loftier kind. Prophets would set forth in glowing words their apocalyptic visions. Outpourings of Glossolalia would be interpreted as declaring the praise of Christ and the meaning of his work. What we should now recognise as Christian speculation had its beginnings, not in the studied thinking of theologians, but in flashes of intuition which accompanied strong emotion. From the first, therefore, the higher Christian knowledge was understood to proceed directly from the Spirit; and it was not difficult to see how this primitive belief was able to link itself, as the Gentile mission advanced, with the Hellenistic idea of Gnosis. It was taken

for granted that behind the Gospel message in its literal form there was a deeper import which had to be discerned by a higher illumination. Already in Mark's Gospel reference is made to the "mystery of the Kingdom," which was veiled from common eyes and could only be disclosed within the inner circle of disciples.[1] All the traditional facts of Christian teaching were in like manner supposed to involve a "mystery," which the believer must explore for himself, with the aid of the Spirit. It was the very test of his religious progress that he should so pass on from faith to "knowledge"—from the facts to their hidden implications. Paul finds it necessary to warn the Corinthians against a one-sided pursuit of Gnosis;[2] yet he never questions its value, and is careful to distinguish it from the mere exercise of human reason. "No man can know the things of God but the Spirit of God." Only when they have received this divine enlightenment can men discern those supreme realities which eye hath not seen nor ear heard. Paul was doubtless convinced that in his task of interpreting the Gospel the Spirit co-operated with his own mind; and to this we may attribute the tones of authority with which he writes. He is convinced that what he offers is not the doubtful result of his own reflection but the truth committed to him by the Spirit.

For Paul, therefore, the Spirit is the organ of Christian revelation, and as such he ascribes to it a threefold activity. (1) It confirms the message

[1] Mark iv. 11. [2] 1 Cor. viii. 1 ff.

which had come down in the tradition. From the beginning the church had proclaimed the facts concerning Jesus and the cardinal beliefs which rested on them, but the witness of the church was not enough. The truth of the Gospel needed to be established by a direct revelation. On several occasions Paul makes his appeal to something he had "received"; and it has often been debated whether he alludes to the word of eye-witnesses or to some inward intimation. It may certainly be presumed that in matters of historical fact, like the appearances of the risen Lord or the events of the Last Supper, the only testimony on which the church could securely build was that of men who had themselves been present. Paul's knowledge must ultimately have been derived from those primitive disciples. Yet he declares that what he had received was from the Lord;[1] and in one memorable passage he asserts that his whole Gospel was given him by revelation and not by instruction of men.[2] The inconsistency is probably to be explained from his conception of the Spirit as in some manner operative in all the knowledge on which faith depends. Those matters of historical fact had indeed been transmitted to him by those who could personally attest them; and he made much of this historical evidence as proving that his gospel was not mere vision or imagination. But for the very reason that the facts are so all-important to him he will not accept them solely

[1] 1 Cor. xi. 23. [2] Gal. i. 11 f.

on fallible human testimony. The truth of what men have witnessed has been confirmed to him by the witness of the Spirit.

(2) But while putting its seal on the traditional beliefs the Spirit also discloses their hidden purport. To a far greater extent than has commonly been supposed Paul took his stand on the ordinary teaching of the church. For every one of his doctrines he seems to have sought at least a point of attachment in the message as it had been delivered by the Apostles before him. But he invariably construes these earlier beliefs in a fashion of his own, and develops them to some further issue. We know, for example, from his own testimony that the church from the very outset had thought of Christ as "dying for our sins." [1] On the ground of this belief, suggested most likely by Isaiah's prophecy of the Suffering Servant, Paul elaborates his doctrine of the atoning death. In like manner he takes over the earlier conception of Jesus as the Messiah, and from this as a starting-point works out his theory of the pre-existent Christ, who took on himself the form of a servant but has now attained to more than his original glory. Paul conceived of himself as guided by the Spirit to these fuller interpretations of what he had received. The Christian message was a divine revelation and therefore contained meanings which were not apparent on the surface, and could not be discerned by mere human wisdom. They could only be penetrated

[1] 1 Cor. xv. 3.

with the aid of the Spirit, which had come from God and knew His ultimate purpose.

(3) It was possible, by means of the Spirit, not only to unfold the truths imparted in the Gospel but in some measure to supplement them and apply them in new directions. From this point of view we can best explain Paul's attitude to the recorded teaching of Jesus. He cannot but have known the Sayings, which appear from the first to have formed the basis of Christian instruction; indeed on several occasions he adduces a definite "word of the Lord," [1] while in numerous places some reminiscence of the teaching is almost certainly in his mind. Yet the scanty use he makes of the rich treasury of Gospel precepts undoubtedly constitutes a problem. Again and again he expresses a thought which might have been illustrated or confirmed by an actual utterance of Jesus, and falls back instead on some general argument or far-fetched scriptural quotation. He appears almost deliberately to shun the appeal to Jesus' authority; and in one sense we may indeed regard his silence as deliberate. Jesus was for him much more than the earthly Teacher who had left behind him a number of maxims for the guidance of his followers. He was the exalted Lord who had sent down the Spirit and who in the Spirit was still the great counsellor. Assured that he possesses the Spirit Paul can feel that he is independent of the commands of Jesus as they had been verbally transmitted. He knows what Jesus

[1] 1 Cor. vii. 10; ix. 14; xi. 24. 1 Thes. iv. 15.

would have said on difficulties which in his earthly career he never encountered, or which have now presented themselves in new forms. He is able to judge for himself on all matters of personal and social duty—relying on the Spirit, which offers a new revelation and yet declares the mind of Christ.

(4) Finally, Paul thinks of the Spirit as unveiling the hidden mysteries, and here we discern most clearly the influence of Hellenistic ideas of Gnosis. He tells us that in his ordinary teaching he dwelt on the plain facts of the Gospel, and kept its "mystery" in the background.[1] These facts, which could be apprehended by faith alone, were always central to him, and he deprecates the "knowledge" which would leave them out of sight. None the less he recognises that knowledge also has its place. The facts in themselves are simple, but to discover their import we must search the depths of the divine counsels, and in this quest we are aided by the Spirit. One of the most striking chapters in the Epistles is that in which he describes how among his more instructed converts (ἐν τοῖς τελείοις) he was accustomed to follow a method different from that of his more public teaching.[2] Filled as it is with allusions to which we have now lost the key the chapter is one of great difficulty, but this at least is certain—that in his more esoteric teaching Paul dealt not so much with the facts of the Gospel as with the "mystery" which lay behind them. His converts had made the due response of

[1] 1 Cor. ii. 1, 2. [2] 1 Cor. ii. 6 ff.

faith, believing that the Cross of Christ was offered them, in the divine plan, as the one means of salvation. He undertook to disclose to them the nature and motive of this plan which in the Cross had reached its consummation. What he taught we can only conjecture in the light of his guarded references. Perhaps he set forth an apocalyptic scheme; perhaps a mythus, similar to those which were afterwards advanced in the Gnostic systems; perhaps his "hidden wisdom" consisted in a mingling of theosophy and apocalyptic vision. Nor does he make it clear how the revelation had been conveyed to him. It may be that in dream or ecstasy he had beheld the unfolding of the divine drama. It may be that he had arrived at his belief by a process of reflection, in which he combined the data of various traditions. But in any case he was convinced that the "knowledge" had not come to him through man's wisdom. The Spirit had illuminated his own reason, directing it in its search, so that he had obtained this insight into the deep things of God. From one passage in Paul's account of his Gnosis it has often been inferred that he ventured on a metaphysical theory as to the nature of the Spirit. "For who among men knoweth the things of a man save the spirit of man which is in him? Even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God." [1] The words have been commonly understood as suggesting an analogy between the human self-consciousness and the

[1] 1 Cor. ii. 11.

Spirit of God. As the mind of man takes cognisance of its own thoughts and impulses, so the divine mind turns in upon itself, and in this aspect of its activity is the Spirit. In later attempts to define the Persons of the Trinity in their mutual relations this supposed analogy has played a large part. But the idea in question is utterly foreign to Paul's type of thinking, and to his whole conception of the Spirit; and when his ambiguous language is examined more closely he may safely be absolved from the very dubious metaphysic which has been imputed to him by his commentators. He says nothing more than that the Spirit knows the secrets of God, just as the human reason takes account of all that pertains to the ordinary life of man. With our own intelligence we can never aspire to the higher knowledge, but God bestows on us His revealing Spirit. In other words, Paul does not concern himself with what the Spirit means to God, but only with its operation in the minds of men. By means of it they are endued with a new faculty of vision, whereby they may comprehend divine mysteries. On this possession of the Spirit Paul rests the claim of himself and his fellow-Apostles to a knowledge that had never before been attainable. In former ages God had revealed His purpose, but its real import had been hidden.[1] Men could not discover the motive that had prompted it, or fathom its profounder issues. Now they have obtained a new power of insight. Filled with the Spirit

[1] Eph. iii. 5.

of God they no longer require to spell out the divine counsel in the uncertain light of man's wisdom. They have been endowed with a higher organ of knowledge, and can compare spiritual things with spiritual.

With this Pauline doctrine of an illumination by which the believer can discern the deep things of God we have certainly travelled far from the Old Testament teaching. What God revealed to the prophets was His will with the nation, the good or evil He had ordained for the immediate future, the fact of His unwavering righteousness. Revelation, for Paul, has to do with super-sensible realities. Since they are beyond the range of all human faculty God has permitted us to know them by His Spirit. It is clear that Paul's thought is here touched by a foreign influence. His idea of revelation is the Hellenistic one of a Gnosis whereby men have access to the higher world of truth which is hidden from sense and reason. None the less, he avails himself of that belief in the Spirit which was an inheritance from Hebrew thought. The Spirit in ancient times had fallen on the prophets, and had enabled them, in moments of ecstasy, to trace the divine purposes. Paul brings this Hebraic conception into the service of his Hellenistic mysticism. He thinks of the prophetic Spirit as revealing those ultimate secrets which eye hath not seen nor ear heard.

(9) *Christ and the Spirit*

The Spirit, for Hebrew thought, is the Spirit of God. Its whole significance consists in this—that it proceeds from God, and is the direct vehicle of His will and power. This Old Testament conception is normative for Paul, as for all other New Testament writers. At the same time the Spirit is closely connected, even in Old Testament prophecy, with the Messiah. It will be poured forth at the commencement of the new age which the Messiah will inaugurate. The Messiah himself, according to the central prophecy in Isaiah, will be fitted for his office by the descent of the Spirit upon him in all its fulness. That it had so rested on Jesus was a fixed element in the Christian tradition, and Paul, in common with the church, regards Christ and the Spirit as inseparable. He declares that the Spirit is only bestowed on Christ's people, that the life which it imparts is the life of Christ, that the fulfilment in Christ of the divine purposes is the burden of its revelation.

It is not surprising, therefore, that in a number of passages Paul speaks of the Spirit of Christ;[1] but we must be careful to understand the phrase as merely asserting, in the most emphatic manner, the close relation between the work of Christ and the work of the Spirit. In our modern religious

[1] Rom. viii. 7. 2 Cor. iii. 18. Gal. iv. 6. Phil. i. 19; perhaps also 1 Cor. ii. 16.

language the Spirit of Christ has come to mean the personal influence which proceeds from Jesus and moulds the disposition of his followers; and this use of the term is in one sense legitimate. Paul himself is never tired of insisting that the Spirit reproduces in Christian men the mind and character of Christ. Yet he does not conceive of it as so acting because it is one with Christ and emanates from his personality. His thought is rather that when men have put their faith in Christ a divine power takes hold of them, and transforms them into his likeness. It is the Spirit of Christ inasmuch as he brings it into action, and works through it; but God Himself "sends the Spirit of his Son into our hearts." [1]

The question arises, however, whether Paul does not, in a more explicit manner, identify the Spirit with Christ. In many presentations of Paulinism it has become customary to assume, almost as self-evident, that in Paul the Spirit and Christ are one and the same. This, indeed, is often put forward as the chief proof and illustration of the Hellenistic character of Paul's thinking. He has ceased, we are told, to regard Christ as an historical Person, has almost ceased to look on him as a Personality at all. Christ, in his view, is little else than a name for the pervasive divine principle which works for the world's redemption. The question is so important for Paul's whole conception of Christianity that it will be well to consider separately the

[1] Gal. iv. 6.

main passages which appear to lend colour to this theory.

(1) *Rom.* i. 3. "His Son—who was born of the seed of David according to the flesh, who was declared Son of God with power, according to the Spirit of holiness, by the resurrection of the dead." The difficult expression *κατὰ πνεῦμα ἁγιωσύνης* might conceivably bear the meaning that Christ was one with the holy Spirit, and was therefore raised to the dignity of Son of God. But the idea that Christ was an incarnation of the Spirit cannot be reconciled with New Testament teaching as a whole. If the reference is to the inner constitution of his nature we must rather suppose that "spirit of holiness" is here used in a more general sense. Although born in the form of man Jesus was the Messiah, whose nature was of a higher order, similar to that of heavenly beings. He had pre-existed "in the form of God," [1] and after his resurrection had once more assumed this mode of being which had been merged for a time in his humanity. But even if the reference is definitely to the Holy Spirit it does not follow that Paul supposes an incarnation of the Spirit in Christ. His meaning may simply be that in virtue of the Spirit which had rested on him at baptism Jesus had attained to a higher dignity, which was now confirmed by his resurrection. However the phrase is to be understood it is clear from the context that the emphasis is on the Messiahship of Jesus; and to this conception

[1] Phil. ii. 6.

of him the mention of the Spirit of holiness is quite incidental.

(2) 1 *Cor.* vi. 16. "He that is joined to the Lord is one Spirit," in the same manner as the union of man and woman makes one flesh. Here again there is no identification of Christ with the Holy Spirit. Paul simply enforces his thought that union with Christ, although it takes place in the spiritual sphere, is a real union, which ought to preclude a baser one. The spirit, the inward personality of the believer, is one with Christ, and his body must therefore be kept pure.

(3) 1 *Cor.* xv. 45. "The first man Adam became a living soul, the last Adam became a life-giving Spirit." It is possible that Paul is here working with some Rabbinical interpretation, according to which Adam was the counterpart of the Messiah, although contrasted with him as the passive recipient of life instead of the life-giver. In any case the thought is plainly that the nature of Christ differs from that of Adam as the spiritual from the earthly. In place of the soul (ψυχή) which man shares with the beasts, the Messiah will have in him a higher principle of life. But it is not suggested that this principle is the Holy Spirit. The emphasis is solely on the contrast of the two kinds of life. If there is any ambiguity in the verse it is due to the fact that Paul has no separate word to denote heavenly nature as opposed to earthly, and is compelled to fall back on the general term "spirit."

(4) 2 *Cor.* iii. 17. This is the crucial passage,

and appears at first sight to be quite explicit. "Now the Lord is the Spirit." Many modern expositors have deemed it hardly necessary to go beyond this statement, and have interpreted Paul's whole theology in the light of his express identification of Christ with the Spirit. But his words must be understood in connection with the passage as a whole, which deals, not with the nature of Christ, but with the nature of the two covenants. The first was given by Moses, who imposed the "letter," the written Law; the second was the covenant in Christ, who gave the living Spirit. "The Lord is the Spirit" may thus be regarded as a condensed way of saying "the Lord represents the new rule of the Spirit." It must be noted, too, that Paul makes his statement by way of commentary on the Old Testament verse which he has just quoted: "whensoever it shall turn to the Lord the veil is taken away." [1] His meaning would be brought out more clearly if quotation marks were inserted: "Now 'the Lord' signifies the Spirit." The interpretation is complicated by the closing words of the chapter, the precise meaning of which it is difficult to determine. "We are transformed into the same image, *καθάπερ ἀπὸ κυρίου πνεύματος*." These words may be translated in three ways: (1) "as from the Lord of the Spirit"; (2) "as from the Lord, the Spirit"; (3) "as from the Spirit of the Lord." This last version is grammatically the most natural, and is also most in keeping with

[1] Cf. Ex. xxxiv. 34.

the context. "Beholding the Lord we grow like him, because the Spirit of the Lord transforms us." But even if we prefer the other rendering, favoured by many scholars, "The Lord, the Spirit," it would not follow that Christ and the Spirit were made the same. The thought would be only a repetition of what has been said already, that Christ represents the new order of the Spirit, so that looking on him we are no longer in bondage to the Law but are under the Spirit and are therefore free. We are changed into the likeness of Christ because as his people we receive the Spirit.

It cannot be made out, then, that Paul anywhere identifies the Spirit and Christ. His aim, on the contrary, is to keep them distinct, and his very phrase "the Spirit of Christ" which brings them so closely together implies an effort to distinguish. Nothing, indeed, is more remarkable in the early Christology than the absence of any suggestion that in Jesus the Spirit became incarnate. On the face of it this was the most obvious solution of the problem of the nature of Christ which forced itself on the church almost from the outset. An approach to it was made in the belief that he was born by the power of the Spirit, and in Paul's thought of him as Son of God "according to the Spirit of holiness." The doctrine that the eternal principle of the Logos became flesh in Christ had been everywhere accepted before a century was passed. Yet we meet with no theory that he was the incarnate Spirit, and this can hardly be explained

on any other ground than that the Messiah and the Spirit were quite distinct conceptions, which the Christian mind refused to confound together. Each of them had its own definite history and content, so that, however closely they might be related to one another, they could not be made interchangeable.

Paul, therefore, distinguishes the Spirit and Christ, and probably it never occurred to him that they could be thought of as identical. When he spoke of Christ he had before his mind a personal being, the apocalyptic Messiah who had been manifested in Jesus. When he spoke of the Spirit he thought of a divine power which had been vouchsafed to men in consequence of the work of Christ. Nevertheless he is unable to keep the two conceptions entirely separate. The functions which he ascribes to the Spirit are similar to those of Christ, and sometimes in the same sentence he passes almost unconsciously from the one idea to the other. This confusion is the more inevitable as the Christ of Pauline thought is the risen and indwelling Christ. The Lord who lived on earth has now become a divine presence, entering into the hearts of his people, and his activities as so conceived can be described in the same terms as those of the Spirit. It may therefore be said that in effect Paul identifies Christ and the Spirit; but he does not, as has often been maintained, do so deliberately, in order to bring his Gospel into line with Hellenistic mysticism. We are to think, rather, of an identification which is forced on him, in spite of himself.

(How are we to account for this merging of the two conceptions, of which the proof is to be sought not so much in isolated passages, like those which have been examined, as in the whole tenor of Pauline thought? The ultimate reason may be found in this —that in Paul's interpretation of the Gospel there is no real place for the Spirit.) Christ is for him a divine being, with whom the believer can inwardly unite himself, and the power which for earlier teachers acted in Christ's stead becomes superfluous. All the work attributed to the Spirit is achieved more fully and intimately by the indwelling of Christ himself. The question at once arises why Paul adopts the doctrine of the Spirit at all, and makes it so cardinal, if it was thus unnecessary; and the answer must be sought in two directions. (1) On the one hand, the belief in the Spirit was part of that fundamental Christian tradition which Paul had received. It was on its possession of the Spirit that the church rested its claim to be a new community, of a different order from all others. The ability to exercise spiritual gifts was the chief test of genuine Christianity. In any body of teaching which professed to set forth the Gospel message it was altogether necessary to find a place for the doctrine of the Spirit. If he had left it out of account Paul would have seemed to class himself with those disciples at Ephesus who had known no other baptism than that of John. (2) But Paul held to the belief in the Spirit not merely because it was an integral element in the Christian teaching, but because

it meant so much in his own religious life. It must never be forgotten that he was himself endowed, in unique degree, with those capacities which all Christians recognised as "spiritual gifts." With his high-strung temperament he was susceptible more than others to ecstatic moods. He spoke with tongues; he prophesied; he experienced visions in which he saw and heard unutterable things. The belief in the Spirit, it cannot too often be repeated, has always corresponded with a fact; and this was so, in quite exceptional measure, in the life of Paul. Subject as he was to those conditions of rapture in which he could not tell whether he was himself or another, in the body or out of the body, he was constrained to fall back on the common belief in spiritual possession. It was doubtless open to him to make distinctions among his religious experiences, and to assign some of them to the operation of the Spirit, others to the fellowship of Christ himself. In this manner he might have succeeded in asserting his peculiar mysticism, and at the same time have preserved a definite sphere for the action of the Spirit. But he wisely refrained from any such distinction. He felt that all the manifold phenomena of the religious life were bound up together, and that any attempt to separate them and trace them to different origins would be false and artificial. Instead of circumscribing the sphere of the Spirit he extended it, so that it covered all the motives and influences that control the Christian life. By so doing he no doubt confuses the work of the Spirit with that

of Christ. When we analyse his thought by purely logical methods he leaves no place for the Spirit by unduly widening the field of its operation. Yet on a deeper view, the effect of his virtual identification of Christ and the Spirit is to make both of them infinitely more significant. The historical Christ becomes a universal presence, dwelling in the hearts of men; while the Spirit ceases to be a vague supernatural principle, and is one, in the last resort, with the living Christ.

CHAPTER VI

THE DOCTRINE OF THE SPIRIT IN THE LATER CHURCH

(1) *The Spirit and the Logos*

In the generation after Paul the conception of Christ as the Logos came gradually to pervade the thought of the church. Even in Paul's life-time it was finding entrance, perhaps through the influence of Alexandrian converts like Apollos; and Paul himself appears to suggest it in one of his undoubted Epistles.[1] If Colossians is the work of Paul—and his right to it has not been seriously shaken—he had begun to incline strongly in his closing days towards a Logos Christology.[2] But it cannot be said to constitute an essential element in his teaching. He works out his main doctrines with the aid of categories, partly Jewish and partly Hellenistic, which have nothing to do with Logos speculation.

In the later literature, however, the new conception of Christ becomes a decisive factor. Although it is never expressly formulated in the Epistle to the Hebrews it is plainly outlined in the opening verses, which set forth the general theme of the discussion. In the Fourth Gospel the identification

[1] 1 Cor. viii. 6. [2] Col. i. 15 f.

of Christ with the Logos is directly made, and the whole theology of the Gospel is determined by it. As Christianity was drawn more and more into the larger intellectual currents of the age, and sought to adapt iself to the prevailing forms of thought, it had no choice but to employ the Logos doctrine. All the rival religions from Judaism downwards, had availed themselves of it in the effort to reconcile their beliefs with the reigning philosophy; and the church was compelled to do likewise. But this external motive was combined with two others, working from within. (1) On the one hand, Christian reflection had now reached the point where it was obliged to take account of the wider bearings of the new beliefs. Every religion is confronted sooner or later with questions that reach out beyond the immediate scope of its teaching. Man's life is bound up with the life of the universe, and no faith can be permanently satisfying unless it can relate itself to the greater interests. When Christ was identified with the Logos it was possible to think of him in his cosmical significance. As he was the Saviour of the world so he was the inner principle of all existence. "In him were all things created, and by him all things consist." [1] (2) But the ultimate motive which led the church to conceive of Christ as Logos was a purely religious one. The Gospel rested on the claim that God was revealed in Christ—that He was acting through him for the salvation of men. In order to have full assurance of this salva-

[1] Col. i. 16.

tion it was necessary to think of Christ as standing in some immediate relation to God, so that his work should have an indubitable divine sanction and value. One by one the earlier conceptions were thrown aside as inadequate to the demands of Christian faith. As Messiah Christ was only an angelic being —higher, it might be than all angels, but separated from God by the whole gulf that lies between creature and Creator. As Lord he could be regarded as divine, but not in the same sense as God Himself. So long as his nature was other than that of God no absolute worth could be attributed to his saving power. With the help of the Logos theory Christian thinkers were able to form a conception of Christ which was fully satisfying to faith. The Word, though distinct from God, was yet inseparably related to Him—was nothing but the eternal nature of God going forth from itself. Fellowship with Christ as the Logos was in a real sense fellowship with God.

We are concerned, however, with the Logos doctrine, not in its history or in its general theological bearings, but only as it affected the conception of the Spirit. It might have been anticipated that when Christ was made one with the Logos a new and profounder philosophy of the Spirit would have emerged. The two ideas of Logos and Spirit had grown out of different roots but had much in common. The Logos was the creative principle of the world, and according to the Old Testament the

world had been created by the Spirit. The Logos, in the Alexandrian teaching, was the agent of revelation; and from the time of the prophets onward this function had been ascribed to the Spirit. By participation in the Logos men were supposed to enter into union with the divine life; and Paul conceives of the Spirit as effecting such a union. These analogies in the two conceptions had already been observed by Jewish thinkers. The author of the Wisdom of Solomon suggests in several passages that the Wisdom which he assimilates to the Logos of philosophy was at the same time the Spirit. Philo appears more than once to make the same identification. It would have been wholly natural if the church, instead of adopting the alien Logos conception, had held to its own characteristic doctrine of the Spirit, enriching it, perhaps, with new ideas borrowed from the Logos speculation.

But the development took just the opposite course. The theology of the church attached itself in increasing measure to the foreign conception, and one by one the attributes of the Spirit, as creative, revealing, life-giving, were transferred to the Logos. How are we to account for this surrender? For one thing, the idea of the Spirit, in the course of its long history, had acquired a well-defined meaning, and could not be readily adapted to the new theological needs. Paul, as we have seen, appears to be always on the point of identifying Christ with the Spirit, but can never take the decisive step. The feeling is too deeply engrained in him that the

Messiah belongs to one order of religious ideas and the Spirit to quite another. But there was a further and more cogent reason for the preference given to the Logos doctrine. It came into Christian thought with a philosophical background. It had gathered into itself the results of centuries of Greek speculation on the mystery of the world. By the adoption of this doctrine it was possible to link the Christian message with the whole religious movement of the time, and thereby to deepen its significance and strengthen its appeal to the Gentile mind. It is noteworthy that Hellenistic Judaism had already been led to it for a similar reason. The author of "Wisdom" and Philo might have based their teaching on the belief in the Spirit, which they touch on occasionally in such a way as to show that they were not blind to its possibilities. But they abandon it in favour of the Logos doctrine, by which they can press into their service all the resources of Greek philosophy.

The encroachment of the new doctrine can best be measured when we consider how the two functions which had been most distinctive of the Spirit are assigned to the Logos by the later writers. (1) Ever since Old Testament times the Spirit had been regarded as the source of revelation, and this belief had been elaborated by Paul in a mystical direction. But in the Epistle to Hebrews it is the Logos, now completely manifested in Christ, which in all ages has communicated the mind of God to men. In

the Fourth Gospel the same view is set forth even more explicitly. The Logos has been active since the beginning as the light which lighteth every man, and by its incarnation in Christ, God has now been perfectly revealed. (2) In like manner the Pauline conception of a new life imparted by the Spirit falls out of sight, even where echoes of the Pauline doctrine still linger. The Fourth Gospel centres on the theme of the bestowal of divine life, but the life is conceived as given through the Logos. Being one with God it has shared in His life from the beginning, and in Christ the eternal Word has become flesh. It is possible now for men to unite themselves with Christ, as the branches are grafted in the vine, and to participate in that higher life which through him has entered into the world.

But while the Logos doctrine thus eclipses and absorbs the doctrine of the Spirit, it serves in one way to advance it to a further stage. In not a few passages Paul appears to speak of the Spirit in terms that may be understood as personal. It supports and comforts, warns and directs and makes intercession. It is so closely related to Christ himself that the language in which its action is described perforce takes on a personal character. None the less it is clear that for Paul the Spirit is not a personality but a power or a divine effluence. As the higher, life-giving principle it is contrasted with the earthly principle of the flesh. The chief impulse towards a personal conception of the Spirit came from the side of Logos speculation. To the Word

which had become incarnate in Christ it was necessary to ascribe a personality; and as the Spirit was more and more assimilated to the Logos it was likewise conceived personally. The same process which deprived the Spirit of the place which it had originally held in Christian thought was also working towards its exaltation as the third Person in the Godhead.

(2) *The Johannine Doctrine of the Spirit*

In the Synoptic teaching of Jesus there is practically no mention of the Spirit, but according to the Fourth evangelist one of his chief aims was to instruct his disciples in its nature and prepare them for its coming. There can be no doubt that this change of emphasis is due to the evangelist himself. If Jesus had really dwelt on the work of the Spirit in the manner described there would have been some trace of this side of his teaching in the other Gospels—written as they were when belief in the Spirit was far more powerful than at the end of the century. What John has done is to read back into the mind of Jesus the later conceptions, especially as they had been developed in the theology of Paul.

It is noteworthy that while much of Jesus' teaching in the Fourth Gospel is concerned with the Spirit less is said than in the other Gospels of its relation to Jesus himself. Here we can discern the influence of the Logos conception. For the Synoptists Jesus

is the Messiah, who is supremely endowed with the Spirit, as foretold in Old Testament prophecy. For John he is the incarnate Logos. He has no need of the supernatural gift, since he is himself of divine nature.

A place is nevertheless allowed to the belief, so deeply rooted in Christian tradition, that the Spirit had descended on Jesus. Everything that might seem to subordinate Jesus to his forerunner is carefully avoided, and it is probably for this reason that the actual incident of the Baptism is left out of the record. But the Baptist is made to tell that in a vision he had seen the Spirit descend on Jesus; and Jesus himself declares at a later stage that his message is from God, since God had given him the Spirit without measure.[1] In such passages, however, we have little more than a concession to the accepted belief of the church. The power and wisdom of Jesus, according to the writer's characteristic view, are not due to his possession of the Spirit. He requires no exceptional endowment of this kind, since he entered the world as Son of God, and can do all things which he has seen the Father do.

The evangelist's own conception of the Spirit is that of a power which first came into operation after Jesus' death, to make up for his actual presence. He asserts in so many words that during Jesus' life-time the Spirit did not yet exist, since his death was the necessary condition of its coming.[2] This conception was doubtless based on the historical

[1] iii. 34. [2] vii. 39.

fact that the disciples did not become aware of the new power until some time after the Crucifixion. The belief thus grew up that it was a gift bequeathed by Jesus, and was withheld from his people until after he had departed. We have seen that this belief is suggested even in the early narrative of Acts, and in the Fourth Gospel it is fully elaborated.

But the assumption that the Spirit was unknown before Jesus was glorified involves the evangelist in difficulties. He was well aware that the Spirit was no new thing, which had first come to light in the Christian church. According to the Old Testament it had moved on the face of the deep at the Creation; it had dwelt in heroes and prophets, and had directed God's people since the beginning. The idea of Spirit, as the living energy behind all material things, was familiar to Pagan as well as to Hebrew thinkers. John finds himself obliged, therefore, to understand the word in two senses, a wider and a more specific one. As a power which acts definitely on believers the Spirit only came into existence after the Lord's death; but in its larger activity it has been at work always. The two conceptions are allowed to stand side by side, and no attempt is made to fuse them in a consistent doctrine.

The wider idea of the Spirit is expressed, above all, in the great declaration of Jesus: "The hour cometh and now is when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in Spirit and truth. God is Spirit, and they that worship him must worship in

Spirit and truth." [1] It is here implied that true worship can have nothing to do with a material sanctuary, since God is not circumscribed by material conditions, but is Spirit and desires a spiritual worship. The phrase employed (ἐν πνεύματι) is that which was applied in the primitive church to that mood of ecstasy in which prayer was offered and the will of God ascertained. Paul's converts at Corinth would have granted that the true worshippers must worship in Spirit—in the sense that no one could fitly participate in the church service unless he possessed the charismatic gift. It is possible that John avails himself of the current religious language, but his thought has certainly nothing in common with that of the primitive church. The worship of which he speaks is one which consists not in the exercise of strange gifts but in inward withdrawal from all that belongs to the visible, material world. "The hour is" when such an approach to God is possible; for by the revelation of himself Jesus has taught us to know God in His essential nature, and has so drawn us into that communion with Him which alone is true worship. The thought reappears in a later passage: "It is the Spirit that quickeneth, the flesh profiteth nothing; the words that I speak are Spirit and life." [2] John here falls back on the Pauline contrast of the Spirit and the flesh; but applies it in a different sense. In Paul the Spirit is the life-giving power which overcomes the lower impulses. John

[1] iv. 23, 24. [2] vi. 63.

thinks of the Spirit as the higher reality, over against all earthly things. The nature of Christ was one with the divine nature, so that the words he uttered convey true life.

To this wider conception of the Spirit John gives a peculiar turn in his doctrine of the New Birth.[1] In accordance with the settled belief he assumes that a mysterious change is effected in the act of baptism. The Spirit co-operates with the material element, with the result that in this solemn rite a man is " born from above," and enters on his new career as a " spiritual man." Superficially the thought is similar to that of Paul, but there is an all-important difference. For Paul the regenerating Spirit is a definite power, which only comes in response to faith in Christ. The Fourth evangelist does not conceive of it as inwardly related to the Christian message. He can say nothing of it except that it works incalculably and comes and goes like the wind, we cannot tell whence or whither. In other words, the Spirit is little more for him than a name for that divine order with which our life is in contact, though we cannot perceive or define it. He believes that in baptism we are somehow assimilated to this higher order; but how the miracle is wrought he cannot tell, and does not seek to inquire. It is enough to know that in this rite a mysterious power comes into operation, and brings the earthly into affinity with the divine nature.

On this side of his thought, therefore, John is

[1] iii. 5 f.

concerned with those metaphysical ideas which underlie his religious teaching. He starts from the Hellenistic conception of two different spheres of being, and thinks of redemption as the passing from one to the other. Man cannot effect this transition for himself, and the work of Christ was to make it possible. As the Logos, Christ possessed in himself the higher kind of life and imparts it to those who believe on him. Some term is required to mark the divine mode of being in contrast to the earthly, and John avails himself of the general term "Spirit." God is Spirit; the life which Christ communicates is spiritual; the miracle wrought in baptism is due to the agency of Spirit. It is clear that the conception with which the evangelist works is not the Christian one, but is bound up with those dualistic ideas which underlay Hellenistic speculation. The passages in question must not confuse our judgment on the Johannine doctrine of the Holy Spirit—the power which did not begin to manifest itself until after Christ was glorified.

It is in the Supper discourses that this specific doctrine is set forth. After the Supper Jesus takes farewell of his disciples, and impresses on them that his death, instead of separating him from them for ever, will bring him nearer than before. By means of it he will be set free from earthly limitations, and will be able to accomplish for his people things that in his life-time were impossible. He is thus led to speak of the Spirit which will be his gift to

them after his departure and will take his place. The promise of the Spirit is in some respects the central theme of these culminating chapters.

The Spirit is described in this section of the Gospel by the peculiar term παράκλητος—the precise meaning of which is difficult to determine. It is formed from the verb παρακαλέω, " call to one," which can be used in two senses. You may call to some one by way of encouraging or exhorting him, or in order to summon him to your aid. The word παράκλητος may thus have the general significance of a " supporter " or " helper," or the more definite one of an " advocate," which indeed is the same word turned into Latin. It is commonly assumed that this must be its meaning in the Fourth Gospel. Not only had it come to be the technical word for an " advocate " in the ordinary Greek of the time, but in the First Epistle of John it is evidently to be understood in this way. " If any man sin he has a παράκλητος with the Father "—one who will defend him as a counsel pleads for a prisoner before the judge. It is possible, however, that in the Epistle there is a conscious play on a word which in Christian usage had another than its technical sense. In the Epistle to the Galatians and again in the Epistle to the Hebrews there is almost certainly such a play on the word διαθήκη, and the double meaning of the term παράκλητος would be equally suggestive. In any case it is difficult to see how the sense of " advocate " can be attached to the word in the Fourth Gospel. The Spirit is not conceived as

defending Christ's people in presence of a Judge, but as dwelling in their hearts, so as to guide them to the truth and sustain them in their fidelity. The idea of an Advocate is foreign to the thought, and it seems preferable for every reason to understand the word παράκλητος in its other and more general sense of " Helper " or " Comforter." Jesus is aware that after he leaves them the disciples will feel solitary and weak, and promises that the support they need will be ensured to them by the Spirit which will take his place.

The Paraclete will be the gift of Jesus in so far as he will bring about its coming; but it is sent from God Himself.[1] In this respect the evangelist is faithful to the tradition, for which the Spirit is always the Spirit of God. But he has another motive besides that of keeping in line with the historical doctrine. He is anxious to affirm that the Spirit will be no less potent and authoritative than Jesus had been in his earthly life. Believers who have not known him in the flesh are not to think that they must rely on a derivative, secondary power, for the Spirit comes immediately from God, as Jesus himself had done. In the fullest sense it will take his place.

Another fact on which John is careful to insist is that none but believers will share in the promised gift. This is declared explicitly in xiv. 17, where it is said that " the world " is incapable of receiving the Spirit; its only sphere of activity is the church

[1] xiv. 17, 26; xv. 26.

of Christ. All through the Supper discourses it is taken for granted that the work of the Paraclete will have reference solely to the needs and well-being of the church. The one apparent exception is the difficult passage xvi. 8 ff., which might seem to contemplate the action of the Spirit on "the world"; but there can be little doubt that here also the writer thinks of the church as its immediate sphere. Confronted by the holy community in which the divine power is manifestly working the world will be brought to a sense of its wickedness and unbelief. The thought, indeed, is closely similar to that of Paul: "If all prophesy, and there cometh in one that believeth not, he is reproved by all, he is judged by all; the secrets of his heart are made manifest, and falling down on his face he will worship God, and report that God is in you of a truth."[1] If this passage was not in the evangelist's mind he is at least alluding to the same experience, which must often have repeated itself in Christian gatherings. As they witnessed the new worship and listened to the outbursts of ecstatic prayer and prophecy, unbelievers could not but feel that they were in contact with some inexplicable divine force. The general meaning of the passage can hardly be questioned, although the detailed interpretation is difficult, especially in the verse "he will convict the world of righteousness because I go to the Father and ye behold me no more."[2] This is usually understood to mean that the world will be con-

[1] 1 Cor. xiv. 24 f. [2] xvi. 10.

strained to acknowledge the innocence of Christ whom it had put to death, but such an interpretation hardly fits in with the thought as a whole. It seems better to take the verse in its wider suggestion —that in presence of the Spirit the world will grow conscious that over against it there is a righteousness to which it must give account. The three verses thus express the same truth under different aspects. Through the Spirit which dwells in the church the world will perceive its true condition. It will be compelled to realise that it lies in sin, that it has to reckon with a divine righteousness, that it will presently be judged.

Several times in the Supper discourses the Paraclete is called the "Spirit of truth."[1] "Truth" is one of the favourite Johannine terms, and has to be understood in the light of the writer's conviction that the final revelation has now been vouchsafed through the Logos. Hitherto men could only surmise the nature and purposes of God, but now that Christ has appeared as the incarnate Word all veils have been drawn aside. The Spirit is the "Spirit of truth" because its chief function is to perpetuate and assert in ever larger measure the revelation given in Christ. He had come from God, manifesting in himself the divine nature, and the Spirit has likewise come forth from God. With sense and reason men can perceive only the outward show of things; by means of the Spirit they apprehend "the truth." It throws light on things to

[1] xiv. 17; xv. 26; xvi. 13.

come, and on the mysteries of the unseen world, and on the ultimate reality.

This revelation has an absolute value. The Spirit, like the Logos, proceeds from God, and conveys its message immediately from God. Yet the evangelist is careful to make clear that the truth which the Spirit will communicate is no other than that which Jesus himself had taught. "He shall glorify me because he shall receive of mine and show it unto you." [1] "All things that the Father hath are mine; therefore said I that he shall take of mine and show it unto you." [2] Jesus, in his life on earth, had been the revelation of God, and the Spirit which also comes from God will continue the work of Jesus. We have here the characteristic idea of the Johannine doctrine. The work of the Spirit is to take up the message of Jesus, not merely by keeping men mindful of it, but by disclosing its inner purport and applying it in ever new directions to human needs. Jesus in his life-time had been circumscribed by earthly conditions. He had perforce to express himself in the language of symbol and parable and could only offer a dim suggestion of the infinite message he had come to deliver. The message, indeed, was all given in the earthly life, but in one sense this was only a fragment and a beginning. Jesus had addressed himself to a given time, under necessary limitations. His Gospel had conveyed the whole truth of God, but in a latent, potential form. To use John's own figure, it was like a seed of corn

[1] xvi. 14. [2] xvi. 15.

which contains in it the wealth of many harvests, but as yet is only a promise. The Spirit was given that it might unfold what was wrapt up in that message of Jesus. It would take the things that were Christ's—the sayings uttered in parable, the life enacted on a narrow stage, the divine nature appearing in the form of man, and would disclose, ever more fully, their hidden significance. As new generations came, living under other conditions and sharing in knowledge which had been withheld from the first disciples, they would apprehend the message in new ways, and express it from time to time in new and vital forms under the guidance of the Spirit. They would understand those many things which Jesus had desired to say to his disciples, but which as yet they could not bear. In his doctrine of the Spirit John thus sets forth his conception of Christianity as a revelation made to men once for all, and yet forever renewing itself—always responsive to the world's changing needs and taking into itself fresh elements, and yet remaining one with the message proclaimed by Christ. We have here, perhaps, the most original and fruitful of all the doctrines of the Fourth Gospel, and the Gospel itself has grown out of it and illustrates its meaning. The evangelist is a Christian of the second or third generation, and belongs to that Gentile world to which the forms in which Jesus had taught were wholly foreign. None the less he is awake to the eternal significance of the teaching, and knows that to his own age it had the same value as to the

earlier disciples who had understood it so differently. He sets himself to re-interpret it in terms of the later thinking. Often he is at variance with the tradition; he lays himself open to the charge of altering or perverting the authentic Gospel. But this does not trouble him, for he is confident that he possesses the Spirit which guides him unerringly to all truth. He feels, indeed, that he is more faithful to the mind of Jesus than if he had reproduced his actual words, for the Spirit has given a larger utterance to the message. It declares what Jesus is teaching now, under conditions so different from those which he had encountered on earth. None the less the evangelist is assured that he repeats the original Gospel, and for this reason throws his work into the form of a life of Jesus. He takes up the familiar story and interprets it afresh, in such a manner that it is fraught with a deeper import. Jesus working in Palestine among his own disciples becomes one with the invisible Lord, who is present everywhere and at all times with his disciples. All that he says and does has a meaning beyond the literal one, so that the revelation given once in a past age is valid for ever. The Fourth Gospel, as Clement of Alexandria perceived within a century after it was written, is the "spiritual Gospel." It is the historical record illuminated by the living Spirit.

For John, therefore, the Spirit is the "other Comforter," which takes up the work of Christ after

his departure, and perpetuates and unfolds it. How is it to be distinguished from Christ himself? We have seen that Paul, in his effort to enlarge the scope of the Spirit's activity, was compelled to make it identical, at almost all points, with that of Christ. John is confronted by the same difficulty in a yet acuter form. It is evident that he is always trying to preserve a distinction. He affirms that Christ and the Spirit have both come from the Father, and are therefore independent of each other. He describes the Spirit as " another Paraclete," different from him who had hitherto supported his people. Throughout the Supper discourses Jesus always speaks of the Spirit as other than himself. Nevertheless the evangelist finds it impossible to keep Christ and the Spirit separate. Almost in the same sentence in which he tells how the Spirit will come Jesus declares " I will come," [1] and every saying about the Spirit is followed in like manner by another, in which he speaks of his own abiding presence. It is clear that the two conceptions mingled with each other in the writer's mind. The Spirit who would keep the world mindful of Christ and continue his work in each succeeding age, would be no other than Christ himself, abiding with his people. It may be granted that in his doctrine of the Spirit the evangelist gave a new and profound conception to Christian thought, but logically there was no place for it in his theology. Like Paul he makes room for a doctrine which had been integral

[1] xiv. 18.

to Christian teaching from the first, and which Paul himself had invested with a central significance; but he can only do so by merging the Spirit in the invisible Christ.

In one way he succeeds better than Paul in keeping the Spirit distinct, for he limits its activity to the one work of *revelation*. Paul thinks of the Spirit as above all the regenerating power, but in the Fourth Gospel it is Christ himself who is the Life-giver. As the Logos who participates in the divine nature he has life in himself, and imparts it to those who abide in him, as the vine supplies life to the branches. The Spirit is the perpetual source not of life but of revelation. It takes the words of Christ and implants them in the hearts of believers, and unfolds more and more of their inexhaustible meaning. But the distinction which is thus obtained by assigning a special function to the Spirit is only an apparent one. As Christ is the Life he is also the Light of men. He is the Word through whom God has ever been speaking, and who has now come himself into the world as the perfect revelation. By his doctrine of the Spirit John indeed secures a new significance for this revelation in Christ. He has shown how the truth imparted under given historical forms can yet maintain itself from age to age—always responsive to changing needs and conditions. If we can think of Christianity as the final religion, capable of an endless self-renewal, this is due above all else to the conception of the Spirit which was first set forth in the Fourth Gospel. None the less the

conception is superfluous. The evangelist declares that Christ himself will remain in living fellowship with his people, and there is no need for the other Comforter who will come in his stead.

The First Epistle of John presents a doctrine of the Spirit which differs in several respects from that of the Gospel, and this has been made one of the principal arguments for assigning it to a different author. In the Epistle the name παράκλητος is applied not to the Spirit but to Christ himself. The characteristic idea of the Gospel that the Spirit will replace Christ after his departure is absent from the shorter writing. More than once in the Epistle the Spirit is described as an " anointing " (χρίσμα). The idea may be that as Jesus became χριστός by the descent of the Spirit upon him, so his people are united with him by their possession of the Spirit. Or, more likely, there is a reference to some practice of the false teachers, who pretended to a higher knowledge in virtue of a mystical " anointing " which they had undergone. The writer affirms that all knowledge must come from the Spirit, the true " anointing," which is not bestowed on an intellectual *élite* but on sincere followers of Christ. However the enigmatical word is to be explained the meaning is clear—that through possession of the Spirit the believers have been divinely illuminated and need not that any man should teach them.

It may be granted that the Epistle in these respects is at variance with the Gospel, but there is no

necessary conflict. The differences can be fully explained by the fact that the author of the Epistle writes with a well-defined purpose. He does not seek to show, as in the Gospel, how the work of Christ was continued after his death more grandly and effectually, but only warns his readers against false teachings which were far poorer than the original message, in spite of their apparent profundity. When allowance is thus made for the scope and object of the Epistle it is not difficult to see why emphasis is laid on particular aspects of the work of the Spirit. The writer undertakes to prove that in the " old commandment " which the church has had from the beginning there is deeper truth than in the heretical doctrine. He points his readers to one test and another whereby they may assure themselves that they have received the genuine Gospel, and in each case they are thrown back on the witness of the Spirit. They have fellowship with Christ by keeping his commandments, and the reality of this fellowship is vouched for by the Spirit.[1] By love to one another they share in the love of God, and the Spirit makes them conscious of this love.[2] They overcome the world by believing that Jesus is the Son of God, and this faith is confirmed to them by a threefold witness—the water, the blood and the Spirit, which " agree in one," that is, converge on the one fact. The passage is a notoriously difficult one, and has been interpreted in a variety of ways. The " water and

[1] 1 Jn. iii. xxiv. [2] 1 Jn. iv. 13.

blood" have been taken to refer to the baptism and death of Christ, or to the two sacraments, or to the incident recorded in John xix. 36. Perhaps all these references are implied. The sacraments are the standing witness to what is central in the Christian message and they were symbolised in the water and blood that issued from the pierced side of Jesus, and recall his baptism and death. But however we are to understand the water and blood it is the Spirit which accompanies their evidence and gives it force and meaning. All elements in Christian doctrine and worship, all activities that belong to the Christian life, have the testimony of the Spirit behind them. This is the ultimate evidence whereby we know that the truth communicated to us is of God.

When he insists, however, on the witness of the Spirit the writer is confronted by one difficulty which might seem to neutralise his whole argument. The heretics whom he opposes likewise made their appeal to the Spirit. Their arrogant claims were founded on the very assumption that they were the πνευματικοί, the "spiritual men," as contrasted with those who clung to an outward tradition. In order, therefore, to combat their teaching it was necessary to provide a test by which the true Spirit might be distinguished from the false. "Beloved, believe not every Spirit, but prove the spirits whether they are of God; every spirit that confesses that Jesus is come in the flesh is of God, and every spirit that confesseth not Jesus is not of God." [1] The Spirit is

[1] 1 Jn. iv. 1–3.

known by this—that it testifies to the reality of Jesus' earthly life. We have here the most striking evidence that the doctrine of the Spirit in the Epistle, despite all superficial differences, is in essential harmony with that of the Gospel. To be sure the evangelist conceives of the Spirit in a far larger manner, as the power which unfolds and perpetuates the work of Christ. But his thought, as we have seen, all turns on the conviction that the Spirit which works now is linked with the earthly life of Jesus, and interprets its meaning. "He shall take of the things that are mine and show them unto you." No view can be more mistaken than that which would regard the Gospel as an attempt to resolve the earthly life of Jesus into a mystical allegory. On the contrary, the evangelist is bent on asserting the *fact* of the life. Accepting as he does the speculative doctrines of his time, he seeks to relate them to the historical life, and declares that only thus do they have real value. It is this conviction also which underlies the Epistle, and finds utterance in its central formula that Jesus has come in the flesh. The writer holds that those only who subscribe to this belief can lay claim to the Spirit of God. So far from conflicting with that of the Gospel the doctrine of the Epistle is in full harmony with it, and serves to elucidate and define it. In the light of the Epistle, too, we seem to discern the practical motive that lies behind the teaching of the Gospel. Confronted with the new movement which tended to resolve the Gospel story into a vague theosophy, the evangelist sets himself

to assert the supreme significance of the earthly life of Jesus. He perceives that all later presentations of the message can have value only as they attach themselves to the recorded facts and disclose more of their infinite meaning; and in this way he is led to his magnificent conception of the Spirit which reveals to us, in ever-changing aspects, the things of Christ.

(3) *The Spirit in the Apocalypse*

The book of Revelation, although it contains little that is of theological value, must always be taken into account in the study of New Testament doctrine. More than any other writing it reflects those popular beliefs which moulded the life of the church far more than the speculations of the great thinkers. We could never have guessed, had it not been for this book, how tenaciously the primitive ideas held their ground among the mass of ordinary Christians. At the time when Revelation was written Paul had transformed the original message into a profound theology, and a man of rare mystical genius, in that very region of Ephesus, was about to advance yet further on the teaching of Paul. Yet the writer of Revelation is aware that he can appeal most directly and powerfully to the church in a dangerous crisis by reverting to the beliefs which had prevailed in the earliest days. His

doctrine of the Spirit, like all his other conceptions, is of a purely primitive type. No hint is afforded us in the book of the far-reaching development which the idea of the Spirit had undergone since the day of Pentecost.

Even in the circumstances of its origin the book connects itself with the primitive notion of the Spirit. It purports to be the work of a Christian prophet to whom a marvellous vision is communicated in one of those moods of ecstasy which were attributed in the early church to the inrush of the Spirit. That the author had really passed through such an experience there is no reason to doubt. We know that well on into the second century the charismatic phenomena were wont to manifest themselves in the worship of the church. Ignatius describes, almost as a matter of course, how he was suddenly inspired while addressing the faithful, and broke out into prophecy.[1] The seer of Revelation, although he was solitary in Patmos on the Lord's day, was visited by the prophetic afflatus, as he had formerly been, at that same hour, in the Christian assembly. His book, we may well believe, grew out of that visionary experience. In its present form it is a product of conscious literary art, and has been elaborated with the aid of earlier apocalyptic works. Yet in its main outline it may be regarded as an authentic utterance of prophecy, of the type which had been familiar to the church from the outset.

[1] Ignat. Philad. vii.

In his account of the origin of the book the author clearly indicates that he thinks of the Spirit in the primitive manner as a power which enters into him and uses him for the time being as its instrument. Sometimes, as in the messages to the seven churches, it seems almost to be identified with Christ, but here also it is conceived impersonally. The recurring formula "hear what the Spirit saith" means nothing more than that the Spirit serves as the vehicle of a divine message. It is only in the ecstatic mood that the seer becomes aware of Christ addressing him, and his thought of the Spirit thus merges with that of the Lord himself.

The primitive strain in the writer's conception is apparent when he alludes, more than once, to the Spirit transporting him from place to place.[1] The Old Testament had told how Elijah and Ezekiel had been rapt away by the Spirit, and this conception of the Spirit as a demonic power had passed over into the Christian tradition. Jesus was caught up by the Spirit in the Temptation, and Philip after his meeting with the Ethiopian. In Revelation, however, we can trace an advance on the crude idea of a power which lifts a man bodily and transfers him from one place to another. During his whole series of visions the body of the seer is assumed to be quiescent. It is his inner self on which the Spirit lays hold, conveying him suddenly from earth to heaven, and from region to region of the heavenly world.

[1] Cf. Rev. iv. 2; xvii. 3.

The close dependence on primitive doctrine is evident in several passages which might appear, at first sight, to have a mystical import. It is doubtless in the light of early Christian worship that we must explain the difficult verse xiv. 13: "I heard a voice from heaven saying unto me, Write, blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth; Yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labours and their works do follow them." The allusion may be to the responses in the church meeting, in which the utterance of a prophet was confirmed by some other speaker, likewise under the influence of the Spirit. Or perhaps the words, "Yea, saith the Spirit," are thrown in parenthetically to assure the reader that the prophet merely repeats what he has heard through the Spirit. In like manner we may explain the words in xxii. 17—"The Spirit and the Bride say Come." The Bride, as the context shows, is the Church, at last free and triumphant and ready to be espoused to the Lord. The church calls on Christ to return quickly as he had promised, and this appeal is reinforced by the Spirit which dwells in the church. Such invocations were no doubt frequent in the Christian assembly, and found utterance through the prophets, who spoke on the impulse of the Spirit. John may indeed be here alluding to himself as endowed with the Spirit that he may express the longings of the redeemed community.

Another passage which must be interpreted by

primitive practice is xix. 10—" the testimony of Jesus is the Spirit of prophecy." The reference, as we gather from the context, is to Christian prophets, whose chief function, as John conceives it, is to bear witness to the claims of Christ. The Spirit which spoke through them expressed itself in many different ways, and dealt with manifold aspects of the Christian message; but in all its utterances it was guided by Christ and offered testimony to him. Paul also makes it the test of genuine possession by the Spirit that " no man can say that Jesus is Lord but by the Holy Spirit "; and the Fourth evangelist declares no less emphatically that the Spirit is known by the witness which it bears to Jesus. In the passage of Revelation we may perhaps discover a reference to the heretical teachers who claimed to possess the Spirit in exceptional measure. The rule is laid down, as in the 1st Epistle of John, that no utterance of the Spirit can be accepted as genuine unless in some unmistakable way it bears testimony to Jesus.

At every point, therefore, the conception attaches itself to primitive ideas. There is nothing that suggests the influence of later reflection on the Spirit as the controlling motive in all Christian action, the power which changes man's earthly nature, the Paraclete which continues the work of Christ. If anything the sphere of the Spirit's operation is narrower than it had been in the primitive church. No allowance is made for that

diversity of gifts of which so much is made in the book of Acts and the 1st Epistle to Corinthians. The one charisma which the writer seems to contemplate is that of prophecy, although it may well be that this limitation is due to the particular purpose of his work. He is himself a prophet, and his concern from first to last is with those future events which the Spirit has revealed to him. It is associated with the one charisma, to the exclusion of all else.

In one respect, however, the doctrine as it meets us in Revelation has suffered a real impoverishment. The writer thinks of God as effecting His will through a multitude of spiritual agencies, and fails to draw any firm distinction between these and the Holy Spirit. In this connection a peculiar difficulty is involved in the opening salutation,[1] where the "seven spirits which are before the throne" are mentioned along with God and Christ. The verse has sometimes been regarded as a sort of Trinitarian formula, in which a multiplicity of Spirits takes the place of the one Spirit, but a fantastic doctrine of this kind cannot justly be imputed to the writer. It must be remembered that when he wrote the conception of the Trinity had not yet been formulated, and the verse, with its strange collocation, did not carry the suggestion which it now has for us. The first readers of the book would not dream of identifying the Seven Spirits with the holy Spirit, much less of conjoining

[1] Rev. i. 4.

them in a Trinity with God and Christ. None the less it is true that the author does not clearly distinguish between the one Spirit of God and the other spiritual agencies which play their part in his vision. In the popular Christianity of a later time, most conspicuously in the "Shepherd of Hermas," the Holy Spirit became one among the angels, and this mode of thinking is already foreshadowed in Revelation. The popular mind has always been prone to throw religious ideas into mythological form, and the temptation was naturally stronger in an age when religion generally was still entangled in polytheism. It was difficult to avoid a confusion between the one divine Spirit and the many powers which were likewise included under the vague name of Spirits. Such a confusion is perhaps accountable for the curious phrase near the close of the book—"The Lord, the God of the spirits of the prophets, sent his angel to show unto his servants the things which must shortly come to pass." [1] Paul, it is true, also refers to the "spirits of the prophets"; but the thought in his mind is plainly that the one Spirit manifests itself in a variety of gifts. The author of Revelation appears to think of separate spirits, which take up their abode in the different prophets. Not only so, but these spirits themselves have knowledge of the will of God only when it is communicated to them by an angel of higher rank. The writer no doubt expresses himself in the figurative language of

[1] Rev. xxii. 6.

apocalyptic, which must not be construed in any strict theological sense; but a verse like that which has just been quoted would have been unintelligible to Paul, even as imagery. We cannot but feel that the conception of the Spirit, as it was held in earlier times, has been obscured by the overgrowth of mythological ideas.

(4) *The Spirit in the Later Epistles*

Towards the close of the New Testament period the doctrine of the Spirit ceases to occupy its primary place in Christian thought. This is apparent even in the Fourth Gospel, where the Spirit has become identical with the invisible Christ, and in the later Epistles the decay of the primitive conception is still more evident. These Epistles, which all in their different ways reflect the theology of the rising Catholic church, continue to avail themselves of the idea of the Spirit, but it tends to become ever more formal and restricted.

The change is partly due, as has been shown already, to the encroachments of the Logos theory, to which the higher speculations on the Person and work of Christ attached themselves in growing measure. Jesus was no longer regarded as the Messiah, supremely endowed with the Spirit, but as the incarnate Logos; and the idea of the Spirit, bequeathed by him to his disciples, was replaced by that of his own presence abiding with them,

now that his Logos nature is set free from earthly constraints. The privileges and gifts which were formerly ascribed to possession by the Spirit are now associated with the indwelling presence of Christ.

The decay of the doctrine may be further explained from the waning of that enthusiasm which had made it easy and almost necessary to believe in the energising of a divine Spirit. Every great outburst of effort is followed by a corresponding lassitude, and this reaction was the more inevitable in the early church as the exalted mood had been fostered by a hope which had apparently failed. The Kingdom of God had not come in the manner that the first eager disciples had anticipated, and the church had perforce to resign itself to an indefinite period of waiting. A religious apathy like that against which the writer to the Hebrews makes his protest was little calculated to evoke the old manifestations of the Spirit. These had by no means ceased, for Christian worship well on into the second century appears to have been marked by prophecy, speaking with tongues, ecstatic visions. The writer of Revelation takes for granted that the Spirit is still active as in the first age, and speaks of it in the language of the Apostles. But the spiritual worship had lost its spontaneity. There are signs that prophecy and Glossolalia were now deliberately cultivated, with the aid, perhaps, of mechanical means. So far from being the revered vehicles of the Spirit, the prophets were falling into

disrepute, and although their visits were grudgingly tolerated there was open suspicion of their good faith. Doubtless there were still impassioned souls, like the seer of Revelation and Ignatius, who could truly feel that they were speaking from a higher impulse, but in ordinary worship the operation of the Spirit was a matter of form, and could no longer be related to the central issues of the Christian life.

But perhaps the chief cause that led to the weakening of the old conception was the heightened value now assigned to the church and its ministry. In early days the church had been a free brotherhood, with little organisation, no regular officers, no stated rules of worship. All members in theory were alike gifted with the Spirit, although in diverse ways, and the whole aim was to enable the Spirit to work without hindrance. This free community was now regulated, ever more strictly and elaborately. The belief that all were possessed of the Spirit had led in many cases to dangerous license, and was now discouraged. It was assumed that the divine influence was only imparted under given conditions and along appointed channels. A paramount value was attributed to the sacraments, and the Eucharist especially became the very centre of Christian piety. By means of this ordinance the Spirit, which had been wont to fall on men suddenly and unexpectedly, was supposed to communicate itself at stated intervals. The ministry of the church now began to take the form of an official priesthood. Formerly every member was required

to take his share in the worship—contributing a psalm, a tongue, a prayer, according to his measure of the Spirit. But now officers were set apart for the more important duties, and their appointment was understood to carry with it the necessary grace. For others than these chosen ministers to interfere in the service was a presumption, and even a kind of sacrilege. As a result of all these changes the doctrine of the Spirit was not only modified but to a great extent was actually perverted. In its origin it had been a protest against all that was statutory and mechanical in religion. It involved a belief that a new order had set in, and that henceforth men were to serve God freely and spontaneously, subject to no control except that of the Spirit which directed them according to God's will. This very idea of the Spirit was now pressed into the service of a mechanical system. The sacraments, the official ministry, the regulations of the organised church were regarded as the necessary organs of the Spirit, and were therefore credited with a divine authority.

The Epistle to the Hebrews is a typical product of the Catholic Christianity which was developing in this age. Its traditional title would connect it with some group of Jewish believers who held to their ancestral customs, in spite of the victory of Pauline ideas; but this view of the Epistle is almost certainly mistaken. The author indeed takes his stand on the Old Testament, and sets

himself to interpret the work of Christ by the analogy of the ritual ordained for the day of Atonement. But he works out the Old Testament suggestions with the aid of Greek speculation, and his Epistle bears the Hellenistic stamp more unmistakably than any other New Testament writing. It is intended, apparently, for a group of readers who were proceeding to higher Christian instruction, and the author explicitly states that he takes the primary doctrines for granted. The purpose for which he writes is to divulge a "Gnosis," based on certain passages of scripture which point, he believes, to the real significance of the work of Christ. In judging the place of the Epistle, however, we have to look not so much to its novel theory as to the pre-suppositions out of which it grows. These, it is apparent, are nothing else than the beliefs of the church as embodied in the current "confession," to which reference is made again and again in the course of the book.

In the Epistle to the Hebrews the doctrine of the Spirit holds a quite subordinate place. The writer indeed speaks reverently of the "heavenly gift" which is bestowed on Christians as their peculiar privilege, and declares that there can be no forgiveness for those who have proved unworthy of this "Spirit of grace." But he never tries, like Paul, to relate it to the central interests of the Christian life. He speaks of it in one place as the source of the charismata, which in their manifold operation bear witness to the divine calling of the

church and the truth of its message.[1] Elsewhere he regards it as the vehicle of revelation, especially of that which had been given in the Old Testament.[2] One is almost tempted to infer that he fell in with the belief that the oracles of God had been delivered once for all in scripture, and that nothing now remained but to discover their hidden implications; but such a view would probably be unjust to him. He appears to think of himself as interpreting the mind of scripture in virtue of a divine enlightenment. His very motive in writing is this conviction that he is possessed of the Spirit, and is therefore qualified to advance to a higher knowledge.

The Spirit is regarded not only as the source of the charismata and the agent of revelation, but as the regenerating power, imparted to the Christian at baptism.[3] This conception may seem to point to a mystical doctrine similar to that of Paul, but it is only touched on incidentally, and in any case means little more than acquiescence in the prevalent belief. No attempt is made, as in Paul's Epistles, to explain what happens at baptism, or to determine the nature of the transforming power of the Spirit. From all that we can gather the writer held no reasoned theory. He was content to endorse, in formal and almost perfunctory manner, the belief now fixed in the Confession, that baptism effected a mysterious change, which was due to the operation of the Spirit.

[1] Heb. ii. 4. [2] Heb. iii. 7; ix. 8; x. 15.
[3] Heb. vi. 4; x. 29.

In Hebrews, therefore, the doctrine is secondary. It must not, indeed, be forgotten that the Epistle is a tract on a particular theme, and the Spirit may have held a much more important place in the writer's thought than we should gather from this work, in which he had little occasion to deal with it. Yet there is reason to believe that the neglect is more than accidental. It may partly be accounted for by the author's outlook and temperament. In spite of his many affinities with Philo the mystical strain is altogether lacking in him. His religious conceptions are essentially Hebrew, and he does not concern himself with those speculations which are linked with the doctrine of the Spirit in the thought of Paul and John. But we have to reckon still more with his dependence on the Confession. For all his apparent boldness as a thinker he is submissive to the authority of the church, which required that the primary beliefs should be accepted without question. The day was now past when every Christian was moved directly by the Spirit. A mysterious power was still supposed to have its abode in the church, but it was no longer permitted to act freely and irresponsibly. It was confined to the regularly appointed channels, and under this restriction became less and less of a reality. The Epistle to the Hebrews reflects this later development. We pass, in reading it, out of the atmosphere of the Apostolic age into that of Catholic Christianity.

Of all New Testament writings outside of the

Pauline canon the First Epistle of Peter is most affected by Pauline influences, and for this reason its attitude to the doctrine of the Spirit is highly significant. The impression is left on us that the writer is anxious to find a place for the doctrine which Paul had considered so vital, but does not precisely know what to make of it. His references to the Spirit are few, and seem to be due to Pauline reminiscences more than to the necessities of his own thought. They are expressed in confused, ambiguous language which Paul himself would hardly have understood. When it is said, for instance, " ye have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit," [1] we feel that Paul's doctrine of sanctification has been blended with that of a renewal effected through moral obedience. In a later passage which speaks of " the Spirit of glory and of God " [2] the thought appears to be that a new and glorious life is imparted by the divine Spirit; but the vagueness of the expression reflects the writer's uncertainty as to the idea which he tries to reproduce. With all his attachment to Paul's teaching he is a child of the later church, and the Pauline doctrine of the Spirit does not answer to anything central in his own religion.

For the writer himself the Spirit seems to have much the same significance as for the author of Hebrews. On the one hand, it is the wonder-working power which had accompanied the preaching of the Apostles,[3] and, on the other, the Spirit of revelation

[1] 1 Peter i. 22. [2] 1 Peter iv. 14. [3] 1 Peter i. 12.

which had found utterance in Old Testament prophecy. He suggests a theory of his own as to the nature of this revelation. It was concerned, he believes, with the advent and sufferings of Christ, which the prophets clearly foresaw, although knowledge of the circumstances was withheld from them or was left to their own surmise. The Spirit which dwelt in them, revealing the truth and yet half concealing it, is called the Spirit of Christ. This phrase does not necessarily imply anything more than the belief, long current in the church, that the Old Testament is in essence a Christian book. The Spirit which inspired it conveyed a message that was to find its fulfilment in Christ, and may be described as his Spirit, since before as after his coming its primary function was to bear him witness.

The most difficult passage in 1 Peter is that which tells of Christ's mission to the underworld in the interval between his death and resurrection. "Being put to death in the flesh but quickened in the Spirit, by which also he went and preached to the spirits in prison." [1] The passage has often been held to have a direct bearing on the doctrine of the Spirit; but this view is almost certainly based on a misunderstanding. If the Spirit is represented as the agent which brought about Christ's rising from the dead we have here a thought which has elsewhere no parallel in the New Testament. But the idea is plainly that although Christ suffered a bodily

[1] 1 Peter iii. 18 ff.; iv. 6.

death he survived in his spiritual nature, and carried his message to the spirits in the underworld.

The Pastoral Epistles, like 1 Peter, were written under Pauline influences, and perhaps incorporate a few genuine fragments of Pauline material. In keeping with their assumed character they contain a number of references to the Spirit; but in almost every case it is evident that the writer is trying to employ his master's conception without any real insight into its meaning. He comes nearest to the authentic Pauline idea in Titus iii. 5, 6—"not by works of righteousness which we have done but according to his own mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Spirit, which he shed on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Saviour." Even here, however, we can detect the false note which marks all the attempts in these Epistles to reproduce the Pauline thought. The Spirit is associated with stated ordinances—baptism or the laying on of hands.[1] Its function is to safeguard a belief given in the church confession.[2] It does not come direct from God, but is vested in the church, and is transmitted through its duly appointed officers. With the Pastoral Epistles we come in sight of the time when the doctrine of the church was to overpower that of the Spirit, and finally to absorb it. By its belief in the Spirit the early community had declared itself free of all outward control; and Paul had

[1] 1 Tim. iv. 14. 2 Tim. i. 6. [2] 2 Tim. i. 14.

carried this principle into his whole conception of the Christian life. The Gospel for him meant liberty. Possessing the Spirit the Christian stood in immediate relation to God and had within himself the source of all knowledge, the guide to all moral action. Christ himself ceased to be the earthly Master who had enjoined his will in given precepts, and became one with the indwelling Spirit. But before the century was over the church had formed itself into an institution, and perhaps instinctively recognised that so long as the doctrine of the Spirit prevailed it could not assert its full authority. It preserved the earlier doctrine, but subordinated it to the conception of the church. This triumph of the ecclesiastical idea is illustrated in the Pastoral Epistles. They are the work of a disciple of Paul, who believes himself to be faithful to his master's teaching, but in his effort to maintain Paul's doctrine of the Spirit he surrenders it. The Spirit which was originally the sovereign power has now no other function than to support the authority of the church.

(5) *The Spirit as a Divine Person*

The doctrine of the Trinity, as it finally took shape in the creeds, was the outcome of a long and complex process, which belongs in the main to the centuries that followed the New Testament period. It is impossible, however, to close the present discussion without considering to what extent the later doctrine was foreshadowed in the New Testament.

The primary interest of the early teachers was the salvation which God had offered through Christ; and with those abstract questions concerning the divine nature, which were afterwards to prove so absorbing, they had little to do. No doubt the problem of the relation of Christ to God came early to the forefront, for it was seen to involve practical issues of the utmost consequence. If the work of Christ was to carry an absolute worth and significance there needed to be some assurance that he was united in an essential way with God. Earlier conceptions of him as the Messiah, as the manifestation of the divine Wisdom, as the Lord who possessed a supreme dignity, were one by one left behind as inadequate, and the doctrine finally prevailed that he was no other than the Logos, subordinate to God, but eternally one with Him, and now revealed in the flesh. As yet, however, the implications of this belief were not worked out. Christian thought was content with the fact that in Christ the Logos had

become incarnate, and that through him men could participate directly in the divine life. It was only gradually that the difficulties involved in the doctrine forced themselves to light. On the modern mind the Christological controversies of the early centuries are apt to leave no other impression than that of a meaningless debate over words and formulæ, with no intelligible bearing on the great interests of faith. The New Testament, with its unerring hold on religious realities stands out in welcome contrast to the later treatises, which ring the changes on figments of speculation. But the truth is that the questions debated at Nicæa and Chalcedon were all propounded in the New Testament. Not only so, but they were bound up with the essentials of faith. When it was once assumed that Christ was in some manner one with God, there was no escaping the problem of what that unity consisted in and how it was made possible. Even at the present day the question that presses most urgently on the plain Christian man, as well as on the theologian, is the Christological one. What is the nature and sanction of that authority which we recognise in Christ? How are we to conceive of him if we are to regard him as the revelation of God? Our faith can rest on no sure foundation until this question is answered.

For a long time the church was occupied solely with the relation of Christ to God, and little effort was made to determine the place of the Holy Spirit. To this day the question of the Spirit has remained

a secondary issue in Trinitarian discussion. Later theology has always found itself beset, in various ways, by the same difficulty that was encountered by Paul and John. It has been unable to define the threehold nature in such a manner as to preserve a real distinction between the Spirit and Christ.

That the New Testament writers attributed a personality to the Spirit is altogether improbable. All ancient thinkers are accustomed to speak of abstractions in personal language, and forget at times that they are using metaphor. Powers and qualities are endued with a separate life, and are supposed to act by their own volition like personal beings. When the Spirit, therefore, is described as warning, comforting, guiding, interceding, we must be careful not to press the texts too literally. The Old Testament conception of a divine energy, taking possession of men, was so firmly established that no radical departure from it was possible, and closer examination shows that no such departure was contemplated. Paul contrasts the Spirit with the Flesh, as something of the same order, though belonging to a higher sphere. In the Fourth Gospel the Spirit co-operates with water, as one element with another. The underlying New Testament idea, even when the Spirit is spoken of personally, is always that of a supernatural power. It was only when the Spirit began to be identified with Christ that the attributes of Christ were transferred to it, and among them that of personality. This was the

more inevitable as Christ himself, with the progress of the Logos theory, was conceived ever more vaguely and metaphysically, and it was not difficult to think of the Spirit also as personal in this rarefied sense. When Christ and the Spirit were thus equated as divine Persons, the doctrine of the Trinity evolved itself, almost of its own accord.

The New Testament itself might seem at times to offer a clear suggestion that the Spirit was one of a Triad of divine Persons. It might almost be said to be habitual with Paul to speak of God, Christ and the Spirit as working together in the Christian life. He does so most explicitly in the familiar benediction, where "the fellowship of the Spirit" is conjoined with the love of God and the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ.[1] What he means by this *κοινωνιά τοῦ πνεύματος* is by no means certain, for three translations are equally possible—"fellowship with the Spirit"—"communication of the Spirit"—"fellowship brought about by the Spirit." These interpretations have all found their advocates, but in view of Paul's conception of the Spirit elsewhere as the bond of unity in the church, the last appears most probable, and if we accept it the benediction has a simple and intelligible meaning. The Apostle desires for his converts that their relations should be right with God, with Christ, and with one another. It is significant that Christ is mentioned first, and the sequence of the ideas in

[1] 2 Cor. xiii. 14.

the writer's mind is thus marked out. "May you possess the grace of Christ, and the love of God will then be yours, and you will be united with one another through the Spirit." In other benedictions Paul speaks only of the grace of Christ ;[1] and in the fuller prayer he only draws out the idea involved in the shorter one. In any case it seems clear that no Trinitarian doctrine is implied. Paul does not think of the inner constitution of the divine nature, but simply of the manner in which the higher blessings are imparted. A similar inference may be drawn from other passages in which he conjoins the Spirit with God and Christ—*e.g.* 1 Cor. xii. 4–6 : "There are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit; and there are diversities of ministrations and the same Lord; and there are diversities of workings, but the same God who worketh all things in all." Here too it is not the divine nature which is in question. The Apostle merely insists that there should be unity in the church, since it is composed of those who worship the same God, confess the same Lord, partake of the same Spirit. Elsewhere the Spirit is mentioned along with God and Christ because the possession of it is the guarantee and effectual cause of the new life. "If the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwelleth in you, he that raised up Christ Jesus from the dead shall quicken also your mortal bodies, through his Spirit that dwelleth in you."[2] A somewhat different thought

[1] 1 Cor. xvi. 24. Gal. vi. 18.
[2] Rom. viii. 11. Cf. also *vv.* 16 and 17. 2 Thes. ii. 13.

is expressed in the verse—"For through him we both have access in one Spirit unto the Father."[1] Through Christ we have obtained fellowship with God, and this fellowship is maintained by the operation of the Spirit in our hearts. But in these and similar passages there is no suggestion that the Spirit is a third Person along with God and Christ. Paul simply emphasises the idea which meets us everywhere in his writings that a supernatural power has been bestowed on us and creates in us the new life, since we have now entered into the right relation to God through the Spirit.

In the other New Testament writings it is easy to discover collocations of the same kind. Whenever the Comforter is mentioned in the Fourth Gospel there is also some reference, implicit or expressed, to the Father and the Son. In the First Epistle of John the Spirit appears as the chief witness to that new life which God has bestowed on us through Christ.[2] Believers are described, in the opening salutation of 1 Peter, as "elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, in sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ." In such passages Father and Son and Spirit are named together in such a way as to suggest an inward relation, and it has been inferred that although the doctrine of the Trinity was not yet thrown into theological form it already hovered before the minds of the New Testament

[1] Eph. ii. 18. Cf. *vv.* 20–22. Tit. iii. 6.
[2] 1 John iii. 23, 24.

writers. Without fully realising the drift of their thought they were yet obliged, by a logical necessity, to conceive of God as a threefold Person. In this contention there is a measure of truth. From the time of Paul onward the functions assigned to the Spirit were of such a kind that it could not be dissociated from God and Christ, and the later Trinitarian doctrine grew out of this peculiarity of New Testament thought. Towards the end of the century, if the closing verses of Matthew are not to be regarded as an addition, the threefold baptismal formula was taking the place of the original formula "in the name of Jesus." But the implications which were read at a subsequent time into these New Testament passages were concealed from the writers themselves. They conceived of the Spirit as the operative power in the Christian life, and when they spoke of the fellowship with God into which Christ had brought them they could not but relate it to the work of the Spirit. At the same time the conception of the Spirit as a third Person in the Godhead lay quite outside the range of their speculation. They thought simply of a power from above, which manifested itself in the lives of Christian men.

In the New Testament itself, therefore, there is no real trace of the later doctrine. The Spirit was not yet a Personality, much less the assessor of God and Christ in a mysterious Trinity. None the less the doctrine as it afterwards developed had its legitimate roots in New Testament theology. Even

for the primitive church, to which the Spirit was nothing more than the wonder-working power which would descend, according to prophecy, in the last age, it was inseparable from Christ who sent it, and from God, whose will it accomplished. The doctrine of the Trinity has no place in the New Testament, and yet was involved in its teaching from the first.

CHAPTER VII

CONCLUSION

THE belief in the Spirit is inseparably connected with almost all the primary questions of New Testament history and religion, and will not be thoroughly understood until these are answered more fully. Many of them are by their nature incapable of any definite answer, and to that extent our knowledge of what the Spirit meant to the New Testament writers can never pass beyond conjecture. We have seen, however, in the course of our discussion, that a few facts have been established with reasonable certainty.

The conception of the Spirit passed over into Christianity from the Old Testament, which in turn had taken it from primitive religion. For the earliest mode of thought all unaccountable impulses in human life were due to a supernatural power, which to begin with was conceived quite vaguely. With the growth of monotheistic belief it was assumed that this power proceeded from God, and ideas of an ethical kind were associated with it, and were emphasised the more as the conception of God became purer and loftier. In the teaching of the prophets the Spirit works for the welfare of

the chosen nation. It imparts wisdom and strength from God. It uplifts and fortifies the will, so that men can yield themselves unreservedly to God's service. As we approach the close of the Old Testament period the Spirit is conceived in an almost mystical fashion as the power which makes for righteousness, holiness, fellowship with God.

This ethical development was helped forward by the connection of the Spirit, from a very early time, with Prophecy. The prophetic frenzy was explained by the primitive mind as something supernatural, and when the prophet stood out not merely as an ecstatic but as the interpreter of God's will, his messages were still attributed to possession by the Spirit. Thus it came to be recognised as the vehicle of all revelation, and was itself invested with the moral character of God.

In the later Jewish period the idea of the Spirit seems to have fallen into the background. This was partly due to the derivative nature of all religious thought during this period. The sense of an immediate divine influence had died down, and religion became a matter of ordered obedience to a prescribed Law. Where the prophets had waited for direct intimations of the will of God, the men of the later age had recourse to the written word, in which a revelation had been given once for all. Scripture took the place of the Spirit. But the eclipse of the doctrine may also be explained, in some measure, from the progress of foreign ideas. There are signs in the later Old Testament literature,

and still more in that of the subsequent period, that the Spirit which acted on human life was coming to be identified with the animating principle in nature, and with the power through which the world was created. But the idea of the Logos, which was now offered by Greek philosophy, was better adapted to these purposes of cosmic speculation. Some effort was made to correlate the Spirit with the Logos, but in philosophical thinking the Greek idea finally prevailed.

In the teaching of Jesus, as recorded in the Synoptic Gospels, there are few references to the Spirit, and these, for the most part, of doubtful authenticity. It was characteristic of Jesus that he availed himself of modes of thought with which his hearers were fully conversant. He did not, like John the Baptist, fall back on archaic models, but attached his message to the living elements in current belief. It may have partly been for this reason that he avoided the idea of the Spirit, to which the piety of the time no longer actively responded. But he may also have felt it alien to his own religious temper. His attitude to God was one of direct and personal trust, and he required no intermediary.

Why was it that the conception which had practically no place in Jesus' own teaching was cardinal for the church, almost from the beginning? Some modern writers have here discovered a clear proof of foreign suggestion; but if our records are in the least degree trustworthy the belief in the

Spirit had arisen before the Gentile mission was contemplated. From the outset, moreover, it bore a strongly Hebraic character, and did not begin until a much later date to be coloured by Hellenistic mysticism. There is no reason to doubt the testimony of Acts that the belief arose spontaneously, in consequence of the outbreak of strange phenomena, of which the most remarkable was the "speaking with tongues." The mind of the time, for which even nervous diseases were the work of demons, could not but attribute such phenomena to some power from the invisible world. What could it be but the Spirit, of which the Old Testament had so often spoken? It took hold of men suddenly, with an overmastering force, like the Spirit in ancient times. It manifested itself, like the Spirit, in moods of prophetic frenzy. Above all, the scriptures, in more than one well-known passage, had foretold an outpouring of the Spirit in the coming age, with which the minds of the disciples were intensely occupied. They could not but believe, in view of the strange phenomena, that this promise had now been fulfilled.

From the first, however, the church put a new meaning into the traditional conception by relating it in the closest manner to Christ. It was operative only in the community which believed in him. It had appeared on the morrow of his death. Its work was all designed to further his cause and to herald the approach of his Kingdom. For Christian thought the Spirit was henceforth inseparable from

Christ. The belief grew up that he had himself bequeathed it to his people, and that it had come after his departure to take his place.

The action of the Spirit was recognised, to begin with, only in the ecstatic phenomena, but soon it was extended to all the new energies which marked the life of the church. Disciples of Christ appeared to become different men, endowed with higher capacities of insight and courage and endurance, and these "gifts" were attributed to the divine power which now possessed them. It was still assumed, however, that the Spirit acted fitfully, and produced effects that were manifestly strange and exceptional. With Paul the idea underwent a wonderful development. The spirit was conceived, not merely as the cause of extraordinary action, but as the constant influence in the Christian life, the source of all Christian thought and motive and activity. Not only so, but by possession of it the believer was inwardly renewed, and entered here and now on immortality. At first sight it might appear as if Paul had broken away from the earlier doctrine, and had replaced it by one derived from Hellenistic mysticism; but his idea, when we examine it, was that of the primitive church, though it was now applied to a new mode of conceiving the Christian redemption. For Paul the life which Christ bestows on his people is different in kind from the life in the flesh. Through the action of the Spirit the earthly nature is transformed, and is wrought into affinity to the nature of Christ.

The Spirit in Paul's theology is sometimes hardly to be distinguished from Christ himself, and it has often been held that he deliberately merged the two conceptions. But there can be little doubt that the confusion came about unconsciously, and against his will. He is anxious to maintain the idea of the Spirit, not merely out of deference to the fixed belief of the church, but because it explained so much in his own experience. At the same time he thinks of Christ as an inward and abiding presence, with whom his people are mystically united. In a sense, therefore, although the idea of the Spirit is primary for Paul it is superfluous. No power is needed to take the place of Christ, since he is himself always present to those who own him as Lord.

With the progress of the Logos doctrine it became still more difficult to distinguish between Christ and the Spirit. When he had been identified with the Logos, Christ was conceived in abstract fashion, as a pervasive divine principle, and was invested more and more with the attributes which had hitherto been reserved for the Spirit. The Fourth evangelist, like Paul, refuses to give up the primitive idea, which had so deeply rooted itself in Christian thought, but he can find no real place for it. As the eternal Logos, Christ is himself the Life and Light, the companion and guide and supporter of his people. The Spirit can do no more than duplicate the work of Christ. An effort is still made in the Gospel to distinguish the "other Comforter" from Christ

himself, but the two conceptions have virtually merged in one another.

In the later New Testament books, the idea of the Spirit, though it is still preserved, gradually ceases to be a vital factor. Not only does it yield to the inroads of Logos doctrine, but it is affected still more seriously by the value now attached to the church. The worship and institutions of the church had originally grown out of the belief in the Spirit, but as they were elaborated they tended increasingly to overlay it. Forms which at first were cherished only as expressions of the Spirit were now valued for their own sake. The power which was supposed to come immediately from God was now held to transmit itself by certain appointed channels of sacrament and official ministry. Above all, the Spirit lost its old significance because it no longer made itself felt as in the early days. The primitive disciples could not but believe in the Spirit because they were conscious in themselves and in the life of the church around them of the working of an inexplicable power, which they were compelled to think of as supernatural. But towards the end of the century the first enthusiasm had spent itself. The newness of the Christian message had worn off, and it no more excited the wonder and rapture which had found utterance in ecstatic worship. Religion became a matter of custom and ceased to carry with it the sense of an immediate contact with a higher world. The church in this later period was indeed rich in faith and good works, and extended

itself all the more surely because it depended on organised effort rather than on enthusiasm. But under the new conditions no room was left for the operation of the Spirit. The doctrine was indeed retained, but answered no longer to a real experience.

Strictly speaking, then, the idea of the Spirit did not belong to the Gospel as proclaimed by Jesus, and in some ways it brought an alien element into his religion. Redemption, as he conceived it, meant a renewal of the will. Men were already children of God, although they had disobeyed and forgotten Him, and would find true life when, like the Prodigal, they returned to their Father. No miracle was needed for restoring this right relation to God. But with the doctrine of the Spirit there came in the conception of a power which must co-operate with the purely ethical forces. More than ever when Christianity was interpreted in the light of Hellenistic thought the idea of the Spirit lent itself to magical and metaphysical doctrine. Paul indeed acknowledges that love and goodness are the sovereign things; he insists, no less than Jesus had done, on the need for a moral change. But he thinks of this change as consequent on the work of the Spirit, which moulds the earthly nature of man to higher issues. It is always dangerous in religion to put anything above the ethical. One can well understand how Christian converts were attracted by the thought that through Christ they participated in the divine essence; and in the

New Testament itself the ethical interest is still so powerful that this belief does not seriously impair it. But in the centuries that followed, the regenerating Spirit was conceived as a mysterious substance, conveyed through sacramental rites which had nothing to do with moral conditions. Christianity was made to consist primarily in a magical process. To this day in the minds of countless Christians this confusion of the moral and the semi-physical still persists, and obscures the essential meaning of the Gospel.

None the less, the doctrine of the Spirit has been an element of incalculable value in our religion. It was not directly set forth in Jesus' own teaching but was yet involved in it, and was necessary before it could be illuminated and unfolded. The belief that Jesus had bequeathed the Spirit as his crowning gift to his people was something more than an imagination of the early church.

From a purely historical point of view it was their assurance of the Spirit that enabled the disciples to undertake their tremendous task. They were convinced that a divine power was working through them, and in this faith they could feel themselves superior to all hostile forces. In every time since a like belief in the Spirit has given strength to endure and overcome. In however crude a form it has been entertained it has never failed to lift men above themselves, and to make real for them the very present help of God.

Again, it was this belief that made it possible

to apprehend the Gospel as an immediate divine message. From the first the disciples were conscious that something new had come into the world through Jesus. They went forth with the exultant sense that they were heirs of a new age, that they shared in experiences never felt before, that old things had passed away. Yet it was difficult to define in what respects the Gospel was new. Modern scholars are discovering how much of it was borrowed from earlier religion, and in the primitive days its many points of contact with Judaism, with the religious and philosophical movements of the time, were far more apparent. But the fact of its newness could be summed up in one vivid conception. Through Christ the Spirit had been vouchsafed to men; they were no longer dependent on ancient forms and traditions but had access to the living sources of power. It is in this sense that Paul contrasts the old covenant of the letter with the new covenant of the Spirit. He can affirm that Christianity, as the religion of the Spirit, means liberty, joy, life, fellowship with God. Even now, when we try to understand how the Gospel differs from other religions which appear at first sight to have so much of their teaching in common with it, we are compelled to fall back on that early Christian conception. In the message of Christ we recognise a living power which cannot be defined, and which we can only call the Spirit of God.

Again, it was this belief which enabled men to think of Christianity as a growing revelation.

It has been the weakness of all other religions that they are fettered to a prescribed rule. Customs and institutions which at first were full of significance have been piously maintained until they became an intolerable burden. Precepts laid down by some great sage or prophet have been transmitted unchanged from generation to generation, till all the reality has passed out of them. From the outset, Christianity was saved from this dead traditionalism. The sayings of Jesus were treasured, his example was held to be binding on his followers, but the religion did not consist wholly of what had been once given. It contained in itself the capacity of self-renewal, of adjustment to changed conditions, of progress towards a larger truth. This capacity was latent in the teaching of Jesus himself. He proclaimed no mere rules and maxims but vital principles which could be applied in a thousand ways, and were capable of an infinite development. But it was the doctrine of the Spirit which made it possible for the church to follow out this intention of Jesus. At the beginning the activity of the Spirit was conceived in a manner that might almost appear childish. The disciples were convinced that in Glossolalia and prophecy they obtained new revelations and discerned the secrets of the future and of the unseen world. But even in this crude fashion the church learned to realise that it was not dependent wholly on a truth once delivered. It was still visited with light from heaven; it could discover for itself things which Jesus had left unuttered. In this

conviction that they were endued with the Spirit Paul and his fellow-Apostles could venture to throw the Gospel into new forms, and to penetrate beneath its letter to its inner and abiding substance. At last, in the Fourth Gospel, the conception of the Spirit as the perpetual organ of revelation was made central for Christianity. The religion was presented not as a message which had been given once for all, but as an ever-springing fountain of new truth. Christ had indeed revealed the Father, but the Spirit would receive the things which were Christ's and interpret them in fresh and larger meanings to each new age.

Once more, the Spirit has always been conceived as the ultimate witness to the truth of the Gospel. In this respect, also, we have to do with an idea which at first was crudely apprehended. The early missionaries, asked for some proof of their message, pointed to the wonderful phenomena which could only proceed from a supernatural power. These were a sure testimony that the Gospel was not of men. God Himself confirmed the word of His messengers by these unmistakable signs. But within the New Testament itself we can trace the gradual deepening of this conception of the witness of the Spirit. Paul declares that in the gifts bestowed on the church an evidence is vouchsafed to the unbelieving world, but he also insists on the inward witness of the Spirit. In their possession of it Christians have an earnest of the promise. They have a confirmation of the truth which they

had first learned through men. They can be certain of their high calling since the Spirit itself assures them that they are God's children. The idea is developed yet further in the Fourth Gospel and the First Epistle of John; and in Christian thought since it has proved infinitely fruitful. In all ages, and not least in our own day, the church has been able to feel that its faith is not wholly at the mercy of historical inquiry or philosophical argument. The ultimate witness is within—in the immediate sense of a divine truth and power which accompanies the message of Christ.

The New Testament doctrine, it cannot be too often repeated, answered to a real experience. Doubtless we should now explain in terms of psychology many of those phenomena which excited the marvel of the early church. In the faith and ardour which Jesus had awakened in his followers we should find the source of that new power which they themselves described as the outpouring of the Spirit. But such explanations do not touch the essential mystery. The early disciples were conscious that something new and wonderful had entered into their lives. They knew themselves in contact with a higher world—with forces that were manifestly of God. It is still this conviction that gives meaning to Christianity, and we do not dispose of it when we define it in modern philosophical language that only covers up our ignorance. In the last resort we are thrown back on the explanation which sufficed for

the primitive church. In their service for God men are supported and enlightened by a power that comes from God, and can only be called His Spirit.

According to the New Testament view the Spirit was given by Christ, and operates solely within the church which he brought into being. The outside world can only receive its influences indirectly, through the quickening power which it imparts to the church. It cannot be denied that the hardening and narrowing of religious ideas in the course of the following centuries was due, in no small measure, to this restriction. The church, as the sole organ of the Spirit, declared that outside of it there could be no salvation. It condemned all unauthorised beliefs, much more all alien religions, and denied any worth to virtues which it had not itself fostered. For ages it opposed a barrier to advancing knowledge and to movements that were manifestly for human well-being. We are now learning to recognise that the church is only one of many agencies through which God fulfils His purposes, and which are therefore authentic channels of His Spirit. In all religions which have earnestly sought after Him, in the unending struggle towards truth and liberty, in every just and beneficent cause the Spirit has been moving. All the great teachers of our race—poets, artists, thinkers, reformers—have, in a real sense, been possessed of the holy Spirit. It may fairly be maintained that the idea which lay behind the New Testament doctrine is only beginning to come to its own. The Apostles

were aware of a power that upheld and directed them in their work for God, but conceived of it as acting along given lines and bound up with a particular message. Now we can perceive that in a wider sense than Paul dreamed of there are diversities of gifts but the same Spirit. It is present in all good men, by whatever name they call themselves, and in all impulses that make for a higher and nobler life. This conviction has laid hold on all religious thinking in our time, and is gradually transforming it. "The age of the Father," said the mediæval mystic, "is past; the age of the Son is passing; the age of the Spirit is yet to be." It would appear, from many signs, as if the cryptic prophecy were on its way to fulfilment. The world is dissatisfied with the old exclusive creeds, and is seeking for a religion of the Spirit, in which there will be room for all forms of truth, all messages from God.

None the less the New Testament doctrine has a permanent value, and all the more so because of its seeming limitations. It was one of the grand achievements of the early teachers that they took over the old conception of the Spirit and brought it into living relation to the Gospel of Christ. This relation has never been dissolved, and we cannot doubt that it will maintain itself and grow ever stronger. The belief in the Spirit, in a power that is working through all the movements of history and leading men continually to a larger freedom and wisdom and righteousness, is the very basis of all our modern thought. Apart from it we can discover

no meaning in the life in humanity, and all the hopes we live by fall to the ground. But this Spirit, to whose guidance we trust ourselves, is now something other than an abstract power. Consciously or not, men have come to think of it in the light of the message of Jesus. They take for granted that the purposes which it is seeking to fulfil are those which he accounted highest. In many directions, remote it might often seem from Christian interests, the world is governed to-day by the New Testament conception. It believes that the mind of the Spirit is the mind of Christ. He pointed us, once for all, to the true goal; and the power which moves mysteriously in the lives of men and nations does not act blindly. It is accomplishing, in ever larger measure, the will of Christ, and is leading us towards that Kingdom which he proclaimed.

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